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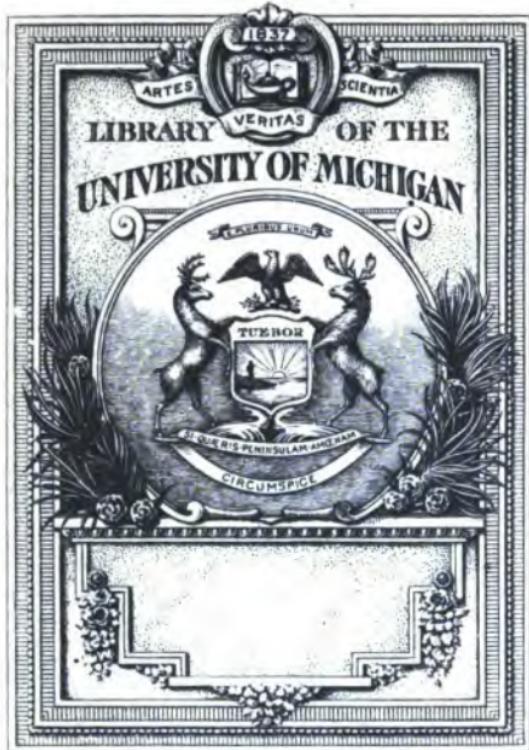
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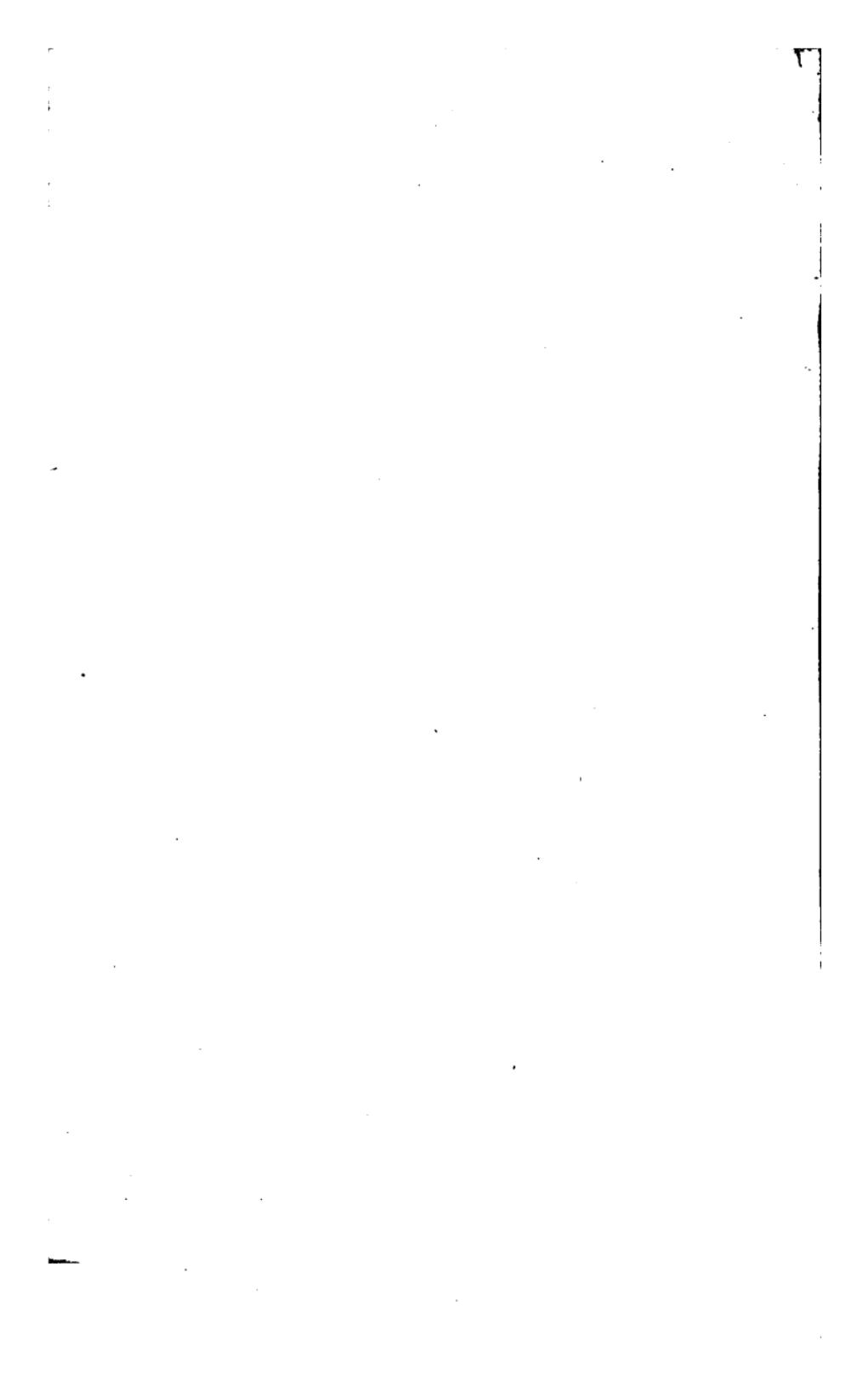
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Banning, John, 1794-1842

THE

DENOUNCED.

BY THE

AUTHORS OF "TALES BY THE O'HARA FAMILY.

— bright o'er the flood
Of her tears and her blood,
Let the rainbow of hope be her Wellington's name.
THOMAS MOORE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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TO THE READER.

SOME old laws, and, fashioned by them, history and tradition, gave hints for the following tales ; and those hints were taken up in the spirit of mere story-telling ; that is, as keys to feeling and passion, in certain states of excitement.

For the sake of the plausibility, however, it was foreseen to be necessary that allusions should be made to the old laws themselves. Hence arose a consideration, how far such allusions might affect, without the will or seeking of the writers, a question *at that time debated* ; and it seemed certain, according to the opinions of competent friends, that if no prejudice interfered with the indispensable task, harm could scarce be done.

Accordingly our tales were begun ; and they had drawn to a close, when the question alluded to became *unexpectedly decided*.

As regarded the point first mooted, we could now do neither good nor harm. A new apprehension troubled us, however. It would not be difficult, we thought, in the changed aspect of affairs, to apply to the allusions spoken of as necessarily existing in our pages, such criticism as—“continuing prejudices,” “opening wounds afresh,” &c.

We answer by anticipation, that if we believed these tales calculated to wound a single generous feeling, or to fix a single prejudice, we would destroy them, rather than publish them. To guard against any such chance after the late great decision, we carefully and anxiously reviewed them, —in fact, rewrote them, (and therefore they come tardily before the public.) Supposing our endeavours not to have proved literally successful, let the will be taken for the deed, and let our good friend (imagined) only point out a

passage hostile to peace among all men, and that passage shall be expunged.

But assuredly we fight with a shadow indeed. It is not in the present day, when the musty folios of penal enactment have become so much lumber, that the honest tale-writer is to be forbidden such introduction as they can give him to the fortunes and manners, the hearts and the firesides of a hundred and thirty years ago.

If, however, our stories are to be read with any feeling except that of reading a story, such feeling, in the breast of *The Lately-Made-Free*, will surely amount to no more than gratitude to God and to Man for his escape from the shackles worn by his forefathers; and in the breast of the reader who still honestly disapproves of the slave's enfranchisement, perhaps a glance over the old rusty chain of legal disability, may help to banish even his regret that he has lived to see broken its last festering link.

THE
LAST BARON OF CRANA.

CHAPTER I.

THE battle of Aughram had been proceeding from daybreak till six o'clock, and was still undecided, although victory seemed wavering to the side of the unhappy Stuart. His French commander-in-chief, the brave and experienced, though conceited, St. Rothe, with a force much inferior in discipline to that which he opposed, had repulsed the whole day the charges of Ginkle's veteran army, made up of troops of many warlike nations. St. Rothe's excellent position greatly assisted the desperate courage of his native Irish soldiers.

In his front, which fully occupied an unequal and broken hill, stretched a bog, scarce passable : his right was strongly entrenched ; his left rested on the castle of Aughram. The cavalry of William repeatedly failed in their attempts to force either of the two last-mentioned points ; and his infantry were equally successful in trying to shake the former.

As twilight drew on, Ginkle prepared to pause or to retire ; but a second and more fortunate thought prompted him to order a fresh assault, covered and supported by field-pieces, upon the Irish right. His historians say, that "it was not without the most surprising efforts of courage and perseverance they at length obliged the enemy to give ground, who, even then, lost it by inches." St. Rothe detached succours from his centre and his left to assist the disputed point. His antagonist, observing this movement, ordered the positions so weakened to be also attacked, and again the battle became general.

While the discharges of artillery shrouded the combatants at the wing which it was brought to attack, Dutch, English, Danish, and French Huguenot cavalry were seen, at full gallop skirting the edge of the bog, to charge the left of the opposite army ; and long lines of infantry, broken and straggling, and wading breast-high through water and mud, appeared, making slow and toilsome way over the morass, bent upon a final and desperate onset on St. Rothe's centre. These last continued distinctly visible until they gained the base of the confronting eminence ; for, owing to the difficulties and labour of their progress, no smoke from their own firelocks enveloped them. But the enemy they struggled to reach did not remain so exposed to view. Almost without a chance of retaliation, they discharged well-aimed volleys at their brave enemies, of which the thick white smoke soon hid their whole body ; and the fierce flash, flash, unceasingly darting out of the opaque vapour, and the frequent breaks thereby occasioned in the tortuous line of the assaulters, alone told, like thousands of fiery tongues, that death dwelt within the cloud which sat on Kircommadon-hill.

It was now indeed a scene of quick and sharp action, and of panting interest ; and the dulled sun seemed fitly preparing to sink behind Aughram castle, amid black wreaths of vapour, which waited to eclipse him, as the the issue of the struggle he overlooked was doomed to obscure the fortunes of one or the other of the princes in whose names arose the shouts of onslaught.

It has not been intended to attempt a full or detailed picture of the celebrated battle of Aughram. Allusion is made to it only for the purpose of distinguishing among the *melée*, at a particular moment, two rival combatants ; and the reader now arrives, by this hasty and partial sketch, at the point of time required.

The attack of Ginkle's cavalry upon the Irish left had failed. The infantry sent through the bog effected, notwithstanding the accumulated impediments of their way, a landing at the base of Kircommadon-hill, and charged up to St. Rothe's centre. The rugged eminence was crossed with hedges and ditches, occupied by musketry, and they were quickly driven back, however, dispirited, and at a great loss. The Irish pursued them half-way across the morass, and, better acquainted with the difficulties of the ground, continued to inconvenience them. Shouts of triumph arose over the hill ; and while Ginkle's army remained silent, St. Rothe seemed preparing,

by a general movement, to, as he vauntingly expressed it, "drive the English to the gates of Dublin."

The affair in the morass became a mere scramble ; man encountering man, and almost by strength of hand alone, deciding each other's fate. Indeed, few but the officers of either side could set their chance of life and death upon a more warlike, struggle ; they, however, still able to use a sword above their heads, although sunk in mud and water, often met in gallant encounter. From among others are selected an officer of one of Sarsfield's regiments, on the Irish side, and an officer of the Enniskilleners, on the English side. The former was a man of advanced age ; the latter some ten years younger. When they singled each other out in the middle of the bog, these antagonists had just partially extricated themselves from deep immersion in a pool, and stood, front to front, foot to foot, eye to eye, point to point, upon the only comparatively firm patch of soil within some distance. Uttering no language save that conveyed in the mutual flashing of their eyes, their swords instantly crossed and clattered. After a few parries, the Enniskillener, by an oblique up-cut, struck off the Jacobite's perforated iron cap, or "pott," and quickly following up his success, slightly wounded him through the folding skirt of his highly-wrought buff coat, in the right thigh. This fired as well as made free with the Milesian's blood, and furiously closing with his enemy, he struck the sword from his hand, and pushed him on his knees. "Rescue or no, my prisoner!" then cried the victor.

"Quarter or no quarter, still your mortal foe!" answered the half-prostrate man.

"Say not the words again," resumed the Irish officer, raising his sword : "the times seldom afford the choice I tender you ; besides, look over the bog—the day is ours."

"It shall never be yours, slavish Papist!" persisted the vanquished Enniskillener.

"Nor yours, then, false traitor!" retorted the other, and he drew back his arm to prepare it for a thrust. Meantime, many soldiers of his regiment had gathered round, and half-way raised above the morass, looked on in triumph. The prisoner suddenly sprang upon his captor, and seized his right arm ; they closed, wrestled, and Sarsfield's officer was flung off the patch of turfey soil into the black water. When he recovered his momentary confusion, he saw that his men had seized upon his antagonist, and were proceeding to despatch him. A sudden recollection of the Enniskillener's bravery aroused his

soldier-like feelings, and he cried out, in tones of command and threat, to have the officer's life saved ; at the same time scrambling among them, and forcing the men from their prey.

" Well, I am your prisoner now, and on your own terms," said the rescued man ; " though I little thought that a Jacobite could ever make me say so."

" Or I, that any abettor of the Dutchman could so well deserve the honour of being protected by Sir Redmond O' Burke," replied his captor.

" We have heard of you, Sir Redmond," and the conquered party slightly touched his hat ! " My name is Miles Pendergast, of Pendergast-hall."

" A stout rebel, as I have ever heard, and as I now bear witness, a courageous gentleman," replied Sir Redmond, bowing a return to Pendergast's salute : " but we waste some time here ; I crave your company back to the hill, whence, after safely and honourably bestowing you, I may again engage in my duties."

" Come—but it seems like as if some new fortune has changed," said Captain Pendergast, looking around him, at all sides.

" Oh, nothing but King James's army in full motion to pursue your general," answered Sir Redmond.

" Nay, by St. George, you mistake now !" continued the prisoner, his manly eye and cheek glowing with the reflux of hope and anticipation.

He augured aright. The tide of battle had again turned. An ally of Ginkle arrived unexpectedly upon the field, rallied the broken and retreating soldiers, once more urged them across the bog, and the Irish were now flying in their turn back to Kircommadon-hill ; flying, indeed, although the military word is a bad one to describe their progress through the morass.

" I am mistaken, truly," said Sir Redmond O' Burke, as irregular groups of his own men floundered past them, pronouncing the word, " reinforcement ! "

" And what now, Captain Pendergast ?"

" Your prisoner, still, according to the terms," answered Pendergast ; " and let us gain your position while we can do so, in company with your own soldiers."

" Agreed ; but must it indeed be in their company ?" looking anxiously and spiritedly over the bog towards Ginkle's side of it ; " Must the fellows return with us ? can they not be rallied ?" he continued, talking to himself ; " Halt ! stand ! but

no ;" the fugitives increased in numbers, and pressed on to the hill with greater energy ; and the shouts of the English rose high, and came near. " No, not this moment ;—so come, sir !"

The English and the Irish officer gained the eminence that arose almost from the verge of the morass ; here they found the soldiers who had passed them, again formed in steady array ; those who arrived with them rapidly fell in with their comrades ; others, who every instant followed, as readily re-occupied their former posts ; an infantry reserve, who had not quitted the hill, joined all ; and in a very short space of time, a formidable centre was once more opposed to the renewed attack of the English force.

" I fear you cannot get out of danger till this fresh bout be over," said Sir Redmond to his prisoner : " yonder is my regiment, and if I defer joining it, in order to place you at the rear, 'tis like to have the honour of a tenth time helping to check the Dutchman, without my humble aid—See ! here splash your friends, by Heaven and good St. Patrick ! Provide for yourself, sir !" and Sir Redmond, cheering, and waving his sword, ran to head his little band, who received him with answering cheers.

Captain Pendergast's first impulse, at being thus left alone, almost at the base of the eminence, and some distance from the Irish centre, was to rush to meet his friends at the verge of the bog, which the foremost of them had already gained. But a manly sense of honour forbade him, when he recollect ed the pledge he had given to his captor ; and gratitude for life preserved at that captor's hands, farther determined him to act a neutral part. His next anxiety was, naturally enough, to remove himself out of peril from a contest in which he could take no share ; and, glancing around him, he jumped into a ditch, now unoccupied by the Irish, and removed from the course which, most probably, the English army would take in their charge up the hill.

But he could observe, conveniently and without notice, from his position in the ditch, all that followed. Nor had he to wait long for matter to interest him. For at least the tenth time, as Sir Redmond O'Burke had intimated, Ginkle's infantry, now chiefly composed of fresh men, bounded out of the morass, and scrambled, shouting, up to the Irish centre. They were received with undiminished fury and bravery, and repulsed more than once, although now their opponents did not quit the hill to pursue them. The adverse lines often intermixed, however,

and pressed each other back and forward, on the contested ground, sometimes coming close upon Pendergast's place of concealment. At last, he recognised the regiment which Sir Redmond had pointed out as his, hastily occupying a position very near to the ditch, in order, along with others, to prepare for continued contest; and he could see that officer waving his hat to his men, and bear him exhorting them to stand fast. Simultaneously, cheers, that he knew to be from his friends, arose upon the Irish left; and, in a few minutes, an aid-de-camp rode up to Sir Redmond O'Burke, bearing him orders to fall back to his first position, and help to concentrate the centre; adding, that some cavalry had just turned their left, and were advancing, along the edge of the bog, to support Ginkle's infantry: "When your lads are in line, sir," continued the aid-de-camp, "the Commander-in-chief would speak with you; and think nothing of this, Sir Redmond; the day is ours yet;" and he rode off.

While Sir Redmond's regiment was in the act of wheeling round to obey, at his word of command, the orders received, some of the men spied Captain Pendergast in the ditch, and presented their firelocks at him. He cried out, and again owed his life to the interference of their Captain, who now requested the prisoner to take a place at his side.

Accordingly, at a brisk pace, Pendergast kept close to his captor. They gained their position; Sir Redmond wheeled his men into line, and then hastily addressed the prisoner: "You will please to give me your company still, sir; this message from the general affords me an opportunity of safely disposing of you for the present: pray, despatch."

The two officers soon cleared the centre, and pushed up the hill beyond them.

"Yonder is one you have heard of," resumed Sir Redmond, pointing to a general officer, who, still some distance above them, seemed anxiously watching the whole line of battle, surrounded by aids-de-camp, and other attendants. "I know his French feathers," answered Pendergast: "Is your Sarsfield here?"

"Second in command, to-day," replied Sir Redmond, "and managing the right yonder: but, credit me, not to be found close in company with St. Rothe: they have never agreed well, St. Rothe is so high, or my Lord Lucan so plain-spoken; and last night, especially, 'tis known they quarrelled outright."

"At any unlucky hour for them and you, Sir Redmond, if there be luck in united council."

"It has not yet turned out so," answered Sir Redmond.

"Well; but if the Frenchman should go down?"

"God forbid, sir! for then, I grant you, we should need a successor in command acquainted with his plan."

This discourse brought them into St. Rothe's presence. After salutations had been interchanged—"I sent for you, Sir Redmond O'Burke," said the commander-in-chief, "to demand if you can tell us whether the English centre has been strongly reinforced since its last repulse?"

Sir Redmond replied that, from all he could learn, it had; but that it was not now stronger, notwithstanding, than it had been at its first advance.

"I know not," he continued, "how many horse now hasten to reinforce it, after turning our left."

"I care not how many, sir; I spoke but of infantry: *my* reserve of horse can well overmatch *them*;—Call them up!" to an aid-de-camp, who immediately spurred down the hill at St. Rothe's back: "Here we have double the force, at least, of those you seem to fear, sir: scarce three thousand, I reckon, come on, after escaping our left—you can see them, sir, still a good distance beyond the hollow way—scarce three thousand, and I show you six thousand ready to spur after me down that hollow way, cut them to pieces, and then turn upon their infantry, and with the help of our own centre destroy the whole English army.—Here come the deciders of the day!" a great body of cavalry filled up the eminence. "To your post, Sir Redmond O'Burke!—Gallop and follow me!" to the reserve—"and—" St. Rothe stopt speaking. Captain Pendergast, who had been watching the brisk and gallant approach of the English horse, looked up to note why. A shattered and lifeless trunk lay on the ground, at some distance from the prancing steed, which, an instant before, erect, proud, and living, it had bestrode. Pendergast's experience in the field informed him that it was a random cannon-shot which had thus ended the boastings of St. Rothe.

The reserve of horse, of which each man had just been about to spur his charger, and shake the bridle round his neck, paused and looked on in consternation. Many precious moments were thus lost.

"Sarsfield! Sarsfield, to lead us down!" at length cried a veteran officer, and the well-beloved name was repeated by hundreds, although in a tone that bespoke an ominous decrease of spirit.

"Ay, now comes the question you and I debated, Sir Redmond," said Pendergast.

An aid-de-camp had, however, gone off at headlong speed to summon the new commander-in-chief from the right wing. Meantime, Sir Redmond O'Burke, after delivering his prisoner into proper care, hastened to his own regiment. Pendergast continued observant, his situation enabling him to be so. The chill that had fallen upon the reserve of horse, at the sudden and shocking death of St. Rothe, increased every moment.—They recollect ed the want of concert between the two generals, and their apprehensions of Sarsfield, brave as he was, not knowing what to do in this emergency, consistently with the arrangements and intents of his haughty superior, were expressed to one another in mutterings loud enough for Pendergast to overhear. The pause itself, at the very moment of excitement, disheartened them. And added to this, there came up to them from the base and middle of the eminence, a swelling tumult, which their doubts readily construed into the worst omen. So that when Sarsfield at last appeared pushing to their position by the aid-de-camp's side, talking eagerly, and showing unusual agitation, the men had lost all the spirit necessary to make their force effective.

"Turned our left, you say! I heard not of it," continued Sarsfield, coming nearer : "Where? who? Now I see them!—but they have passed the hollow way you spoke of, and cannot now be intercepted. Ay, and by Heaven are in among our centre! Come, lads, they shall not have it all as they like it! Down upon them, by *any* way!"

While he spoke, and spoke without making an impression, the infantry of the Irish centre came in groups up the hill, flying in utter defeat. The six thousand horse that should have long ago protected them, waited not another moment on the field, but abandoned it without a blow. St. Rothe's death had by this time spread through the whole Irish army, and a general retreat took place; the fugitives, at Sarsfield's word, hurrying in confusion towards Limerick. In a short time, Pendergast was alone upon Kircommadon-hill, in the first twilight of a July evening; for, but a short space elapsed, after the last of the Irish had quitted his side, before the van of the English pressed towards him.

And by the hands of his own friends he had at last nearly lost his life, so impetuous was their charge, and so questionable his situation. Recognised and safe, however, he was about to move forward with them, when a faint voice pronounced his

name. He turned, and saw Sir Redmond O'Burke a prisoner, guarded by a detached party, and obviously exhausted, and unable to use his limbs. In a moment Pendergast was at his side, took his hand, and eagerly inquired what services he could render him ?

"Thanks," said the bleeding prisoner ; "I am very weak, and unable to go on ; entreat your soldiers that I may rest a moment here, in your keeping."

The request was instantly made and complied with. Pendergast caused the wounded man to be borne aside to a spot not exposed to much observation, and detained some soldiers to guard them against intrusion.

"Thanks, again : this is indeed a favour," resumed Sir Redmond, as he vainly tried to lay his writhing limbs on the grass, in some position which would not pain them.

"'Tis nothing ; I owe you more, much more," answered Pendergast ; "only tell me what that much more, and more after it, shall be—what, Sir Redmond ! you change sadly!"

"Water, a drop of water," murmured the old soldier, in an effort to keep himself from swooning.

"Water there is none near us ; but make shift with better liquor ;" and Pendergast produced a wine-flask and put it to his lips. The dying man drank eagerly.

"This is loss of blood, not fatigue," continued Pendergast ; "you have been on the English bayonets since we parted, Sir Redmond—you bleed about the body, too."

"A little, yet enough to let life out : and I do not want it to stay in. Fortune, country, kith, and kin, all but honour is lost. Worthless life, go you with it."

"Say not so, brave friend,—for friend I call you, friend I hold you, friend you have been to me ;" and with a manly tear on his lids, Pendergast clasped Sir Redmond's hand with the clasp that only men can give and take.

"Well ; and friend I would be called by you," continued Sir Redmond ; "but our friendship will end as quickly as it has begun. Cry not nay, again, sir," he went on in a changed and broken voice ; "there is that at my heart which needs no earthly comfort, holds no earthly hope. But you have wished to do me a good turn, or rather, to do a good turn to one I shall leave after me, for my sake."

"Your Lady ?" inquired Pendergast, after he had watched some time a convulsion in the frame of his new friend, which wholly took away his power of utterance.

"No ! I thank God, no !" cried Sir Redmond, with unex-

pected energy ; and it seemed, in the upturning of his eyes to heaven, and in the rapid motion of his parched lips, that he continued to give praise that the partner of his bosom had already been removed from a life which, after his death, would have been to her, had she not gone before him, a lot of suffering and bitterness.

"Then, you have children ?" continued Pendergast, breaking another pause, and willing to assist the dying officer in the expression of his last wishes.

"I had—four," answered Sir Redmond : "four, although I am a man scarce yet stricken in years ; four sons, and three of them able to follow me to the field, for their country, their king, and their religion, at the breaking out of these unnatural wars. But I have them not now. One fell at Hillsboro', where we crushed, with young Hamilton at our head, your great Northern Union at a blow, sir!"—martial spirit and party pride lit up for a moment the speaker's eye, and strengthened his tone ;—"and him I did scarcely sorrow for ;—the next my second, a soldier of nineteen, I saw rolling down with the blood-stained Boyne river ; and my third, not eighteen, sank at my feet to-day, a few minutes after I parted from you : the man who put a bayonet into the boy's heart did so because my poor Felix had struck it aside when it was aimed at his fatlier's, sir "

Here Pendergast had to support Sir Redmond's head, as it fell back from weakness. It was on his tongue to assuage the anguish of the parent's recollections, by informing him that he too had lost a son, and an only one, upon the field that day ;—but a reflection that it was his duty not to interrupt the dying man's train of thought by any concerns of his own, checked the words he was about to utter, and caused him to whisper, instead, "But there yet lives a fourth boy ?"

"There does—" answered Sir Redmond, gasping ; "my youngest—my darling—the last child of his mother!—and almost a child yet—and friendless—and fortuneless—for all his family are dead, or exiles—or will be—and all his patrimony seized upon—or run through—lavished upon this cause ;—and I—" Pendergast now felt a strenuous pressure, which the speaker had not yet been able to return for his ; then he saw the dread struggle ; and after Sir Redmond, writhing round, had said, "Oh, God, be watchful over the child here, as I now crave your mercy for myself!"—Pendergast looked upon a corpse.

Long he looked ; and then arising, commanded the soldiers

who stood near to accompany him down the hill, and into the bog. His thought was, that he knew where to find the body of his own son, for he had seen him fall. He was successful. The men bore it, still at his bidding, back to the spot he had left ; and there, almost at the top of the hill, he commanded them to make a shallow grave. “They shall lie side by side, even upon this field,” he said to himself, “in earnest of the vow I have vowed to the unuttered wish of my former foe,—ay, here shall they lie, forgetful of party rancour, as I shall be forgetful of it to this old man’s only living son : for,” continued Pendergast, as he walked away, after the little grave had been filled and raised, “the child shall be my child.”

CHAPTER II.

CAPTAIN PENDERGAST’s first impulse was to proceed directly to seek his adopted son ; but the claims of military duty were imperious, and for the present he felt compelled to give up his purpose.

Immediately after the battle of Aughram, Ginkle sent detachments to reduce and secure important passes on the Shannon ; and in one of those detachments Pendergast’s regiment, and necessarily himself, were included. The English general then summoned him to join the main army before Galway ; and as soon as the town surrendered, Ginkle pursued its garrison to Limerick, whither it had been allowed safe conduct, with the honours of war. Thus Pendergast had not a day’s respite to undertake a journey, of which the object gradually interested him the more, in proportion to the necessity of deferring its accomplishment.

At length, early in October, he witnessed the ratification of the celebrated treaty, by which the crown of three kingdoms was secured to William III. and the pretensions of that monarch’s father-in-law for ever abandoned by the Irish people. Captain Pendergast, although a stanch foe to Catholic ascendancy, and in the field to oppose it, was no extravagant party man ; no monopolist, sacrificing the suggestions of justice and fair play to selfishness or revenge ; and he therefore rejoiced, rather than felt disappointed, when he saw that, according to the terms of the treaty, the adherents of

James Stuart were recognised as an honourable, brave, and important enemy; conciliated, in proportion to this estimate of their character; invited to place confidence in their new sovereign, and left free to unite with their fellow-subjects of all sects, in making Ireland a nation. "Yes," resolved Pendergast; "let but the spirit of this treaty remain among us for one hundred years, and all that has yet happened will have happened only for the best."

As it seems indispensable that it should be known in the abstract what the treaty of Limerick really was, an account of it is here taken from a book in every one's hands.

"The Roman Catholics were restored to the enjoyment of such liberty in the exercise of religion as was consistent with the laws of Ireland, and conformable with that which they possessed in the reign of Charles II.

"All persons whatever were entitled to the protection of these laws, and restored to the possession of their estates, privileges, and immunities, upon their submitting to the present Government, and taking the oath of allegiance to their Majesties King William and Queen Mary, excepting, however, certain persons who were forfeited or exiled.

"In order to allay the violence of party, and extinguish private animosities, it was agreed that no person should be sued or impleaded on either side for any trespass, or made accountable for the rents, tenements, lands, or houses he had received or enjoyed since the beginning of the war.

"Every nobleman and gentleman comprised in these articles was authorized to keep a sword, a case of pistols, and a gun, for his defence or amusement.

"The inhabitants of Limerick and other garrisons were permitted to remove their goods and chattels, without search, visitation, or payment of duty.

"The Lords Justices promised to use their best endeavours that all persons comprehended in this capitulation should for eight months be protected from all arrests and executions for debt or damage. They undertook that their Majesties should ratify these articles within the space of eight months, and use their endeavours that they might be ratified and confirmed in Parliament.

"All persons were indulged with a free leave to remove with their families and effects to any other country except England and Scotland.

"All officers and soldiers in the service of King James, comprehending even the Rapparees, willing to go beyond sea,

were at liberty to march in bodies to the place of embarkation, to be conveyed to the Continent with the French officers and troops. They were furnished with passports, convoys, and carriages, by land and water; and General Ginkle engaged to provide seventy ships, if necessary, for their transportation, with two men-of-war for the accommodation of their officers, and to serve as a convoy to the fleet.

"That all the garrisons should march out of their respective towns and fortresses with the honours of war.

"That such as choose to stay behind might dispose of themselves according to their own fancy, after having surrendered their arms to such commissioners as the General should appoint.

"That all prisoners of war should be set at liberty on both sides.

"This is the substance of the famous treaty of Limerick, which the Irish Roman Catholics considered as the great charter of their civil and religious liberties."—*Smollett, Continuation of Hume*, chapter iii. section 12.

It should be mentioned that, in making this extract, some passages have been omitted which contained merely unimportant matter, or details relating only to the mode proposed for carrying terms into effect; such as the manner in which certain moneys were to be paid, &c.

All the passages transcribed will be found to supply information necessary to the comprehension of this story.

If Captain Pendergast felt gratified with the Treaty of Limerick upon public and national grounds, a peculiar private motive much assisted in confirming him in such a frame of mind. He saw that, according to its provisions, Sir Redmond O'Burke's son remained free to possess and enjoy any patrimony that might have descended to him, if indeed any had. This however seemed very questionable, when his father's dying declarations upon the field of Aughram were remembered and considered: and to solve the doubt, as well as to indulge wishes that we have seen him compelled to neglect for some months, Pendergast, very soon after the surrender of Limerick, proceeded in the direction of Sir Redmond's former place of residence.

He performed his journey on horseback, accompanied by a single servant. The man had been a soldier under his command during the recent campaigns, and a close attendant upon his person, at every moment when sterner duties did not otherwise command him to employ himself: nay, his Captain and

he had interchanged the offices of master and man, even before the breaking out of the civil war ; had marched from home together at the first levy of the Ulster adherents of King William, and from that day to the present hour shared almost every vicissitude of a long and changeful struggle. It may therefore be concluded that a very friendly understanding subsisted between them. In truth, the old soldier loved his Captain sincerely, though by no means ostentatiously ; and Pendergast esteemed him in return, and treated him as well, sometimes as gently, as John Sharpe's temper and character permitted, or rendered advisable for the due upholding of a superior's authority.

For John had a will of his own, a way of his own, and a view of every thing peculiarly his own ; and then he had also a humour of his own ; a dry, triste vein of what he believed was mirth, and which an ordinary observer might be apt to mistake for the largest portion of his whole character, but which was really but the vehicle for conveying, at least upon most occasions, his bile and bitterness against every person and thing he chose to select for observation. In such times, such an individual could not be expected to carry on his hatreds of any description with a reasonable or even a prudent method ; nor could it be supposed that, towards the great object of hatred continually before his mind, he did not indulge to the very utmost extent of loathing and rancour. In fact, popery had grown up in John Sharpe's thoughts into a kind of definite, visible monster, of hideous aspect and proportions ; a thing that he and all good people were bound to attack, maim, and kill, at every opportunity,—a real dragon, as it were, such as Guy, Earl of Warwick, had encountered and destroyed. At the same time, there was no rage, no fire, no glow, even in his manner of feeling or speaking, according to this system, against whatever might be the theme of his hatred. But we shall have it in our power to allow him to express himself and his own difficult character in a better way than either could be described for him.

The travellers, passing in a south-easterly direction through the county of Limerick, left behind them tracts of the richest soil ; then mostly used as sheep-walks, and even now appropriated, in some degree, to the same purposes. Before the day fell on them, they had entered the county of Tipperary, rich, at least, in turf ; and although inferior to the luxuriant soil of Limerick, also holding forth abundant promise to the agriculturist. In 1691, it presented however, along the

wretched road pursued by Captain Pendergast and his servant, a black, bleak, and desolate appearance, which was heightened by the marks of devastation, yet fresh upon it, in the shape of burned cabins, and dilapidated and deserted mansions, from the fury of civil war. Its flatness, so far as the travellers had explored it, farther added to this dreary character, and to the impressions which it was calculated to make upon the spirits of the observers. Indeed, Pendergast and his attendant felt the day's journey an uncomfortable one, and their mutual taciturnity proved that they did.

Towards the conclusion of the next day, their road passed the Galteigh mountains ; and now, if change of scenery alone could raise their spirits, they must have experienced a relief. But the sense of forlorn seclusion which fell upon them as they traversed the shadows of those barren, lumpy hills, little stamped with picturesque features, and at that time wholly uncultivated, was not in the least degree more cheering than the weariness imparted by the flat, open country. Captain Pendergast cleared up, notwithstanding, and put his horse to a brisk pace, ere they had been quite delivered from the Galteighs ; because, according to the previous information he had received, Sir Redmond O' Burke's mansion must now be near at hand. Of a frightened-looking peasant who crept along the road, and seemed to look round for a hiding-place when the travellers came up, he inquired in what direction it lay. The man answered in pure Irish, and proved unintelligible to both his Northern hearers : his action, however, was more to the purpose ; he pointed up a spacious valley, which ran at right-angles to the road his querists had hitherto pursued ; and thither Captain Pendergast spurred.

" Well ! the Papishes shame the pigs, oot and oot, in the speech they have," remarked John Sharpe, as he followed his master into the valley ; and he spoke without unclenching his teeth from a short dingy pipe, which, almost from morning till night, except when he ate his meals, remained tight between them. Captain Pendergast took no notice, but seemed now more than ever thoughtful, if not depressed.

" Troth, jest !" continued the servant ; " and yet, yon 's a bright mon, in his ain mind, I warrant : yes ; thinks he has rhetoric enough for a stage ;" this was one of John's favourite phrases, of which he had many ; and a standing joke, too, as was evinced by the slow, chuckling, " Hu, ugh !" that followed it. Still, his master said nothing. " But your honour has a

something on your heart, I'm thinking," he resumed, coming nearly to his master's side.

" And is that so wonderful, John Sharpe ?"

" No, not just so wonderful, your honour ; troth, no : and my ain heart is not the lighter for thinking of what I make bold to believe your honour is thinking of along with me."

" What, John ?"

" Troth, that it 's little better than a woful home we 're bound to, yon," pointing in a northern direction ;—" that is, not precisely bound to this very moment, for your honour has not told me, yet, where this present wild journey, held through this Southern, papish country, is to end, or, for the matter o' that, why it has ever been begun ?" In truth, Captain Pendergast had not cared to give his old servant any hint of his present purpose, although usually in the habit of making him a kind of confidant ; and ever since they left Limerick, John Sharpe had been tormented by curiosity, and not a little hurt and offended at his master's want of attention, until a few moments before, when, to his great astonishment, he heard the inquiry after Sir Redmond O'Burke's mansion. Then, his curiosity changed into an excess, for which there is no descriptive word ; and doubt and misgiving, apprehension and ill-humour, farther took possession of him. He was clever enough, however, from experience of his Captain's character, to suppress all outward show of emotion ; nay, to exhibit his usual vein of sad merriment, and to try for information in the manner we see him adopt in his last remarks.

" A woful home, indeed," was Captain Pendergast's only reply.

" And yet, there is balm in Gilead," continued John, assuming, what he rarely exhibited, a truly serious tone :— " Abraham loved Sarah ; but when she died, and that he had mourned and wept for her, and buried her in the field bought of the children of Heth, in the land of Canaan, he married another wife, named Cetura, notwithstanding : and moreover, being already blessed in abundance of children."

" He did so, John ; but though yon field of Aughram leaves me childless, as well as wifeless, this day, I incline not to follow the Patriarch's example, in that particular. Never shall the image of a living woman supplant the memory of her who—died to give me my only, only boy."

" But also, master," continued John Sharpe, " the Lord moved Abraham, seeing it was jest a natural and praiseworthy yearning, to complain in his vision, saying, ' What wilt

thou give me? I shall go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus,'—and again: ‘Lo, one born in my house is my heir.’ Genesis, fifteenth chapter, the sacond and the thard varse.”

“ Such cannot be my case, John. No Eliezer of Damascus, no servant of my house can have that good chance. My brother has sons, and sons of my name; and they are needy, and will want the fortune that now must pass to them—in great part, at the least.”

“ Doubtless, Captain, if so it must be, your honour’s hopeful and worshipful nevoys will have grace to be thankful for whatever share your love and wisdom appoints as their lot; and moreover, contented that you still keep another share for other uses; seeing,” continued John, in his own view, “ how many blood-relations, besides their ain selves, will look to enjoy the portion of estate your honour says is not marked out for them.”

“ I have no other blood-relations, however, John, who stand in need of my help, or who will do well to think of being the better of my testamentary dispositions.”

“ Troth, just, master; and I was forgetful, not to hold in mind how bountifully Providence has already endowed all other members of your worshipful family;—it will be some auld friend, I warrant, who now little dreams of being so beholden til your honour?—”

“ No, John.”

It was on the tip of John Sharpe’s tongue to insinuate another question, such as “ Some faithful old follower, then,” but his prudence closed his lips, and clenched his teeth firmer than ever upon the short shank of his pipe. After a pause, however, he continued.

“ Your honour, of a surety, woudna be for setting up an alms-house, or a lazarus-house, for a pack of idle, gossipping, women? a practice out of date, in these times, though much in vogue in the days of auld Papistry.”

“ Content you, John, I mean not so.”

With a suppressed groan, or rather grunt of impatience, the baffled servant inhaled through his set teeth a quick whiff of tobacco-smoke, and with another grunt, a nasal one, let it out again. John had a head even too much prone to (as he himself would say) “ put that and that together;” and he could not now avoid most irritating combinations of his master’s inquiry after the house of the deceased rebel nobleman, Sir Redmond O’Burke, with those mysterious hints of a co-heir

who was not to be related to Captain Pendergast. He still was able, however, to disguise his feelings, and to persevere in making out his case in his own fashion.

After allowing, since the Captain's last answer, sufficient time to elapse, to permit the appearance of the former subject having dropped : "And, troth," he said, "this is but a wild and comfortless road we are travelling, wherever it is to stop :" they had for some time been riding up the spacious valley, which was traversed by a chafing stream, and overhung by lofty hills quite uncultivated ; and, beneath their horses' feet, what had once been a wide, though rude track-way, could now scarce be distinguished, owing to encroaching vegetation, from the matted soil at either hand.

"I agree, John ; and, either these savage hills make their own twilight, or else evening begins to fall, to add to our difficulty : mend your pace, however ; we shall soon see the jit of this matter."

They trotted forward at a good rate, and came to a turning in the valley, where, to Captain Pendergast's relief, commenced a stately avenue of sycamores, which must obviously lead to the mansion he sought. The hills at either hand, too, now appeared partially planted, and one, at the left, was completely clothed with wood, which continued along level ground very nearly to that side of the avenue. It was a scene of deep solitude. No living thing appeared in view save the rooks heavily winging homeward to their nests in the tall trees overhead ; and their hoarse cawing, together with the fret of the stream the travellers had just left behind, the wood-quest's note from the depth of his profound retreat, and the rustling of the October leaves, which came, now and then, shaken by a gust, upon the heads and shoulders of the lonely strangers, were the only sounds that lulled, rather than disturbed, the intense repose of Nature.

Captain Pendergast paused awhile, impressed by the effect of the scene. Then, looking for the avenue gate, he saw that it had been torn off its rude hinges, and lay in fragments at his horse's feet. Its piers, also, seemed to have been recently ill-treated. He proceeded up the broad avenue, anxiously glancing forward for a sight of the mansion : none appeared. But the avenue soon took a quick turn to the right, and here he once more checked his horse, to contemplate the objects now placed directly before his view.

For about a hundred yards the avenue swept on. It was terminated by two piers, from which also the gate had been

torn. Beyond them, with a considerable space between, were the piers of still another gate, standing more widely apart than their fellows, and of more massive and elaborate construction. From these, to the right and to the left, ran a ruined wall, flanked by trees, and forming three sides of an open square, of which the fourth side was the front of what had once been Sir Redmond O'Burke's mansion ; a modern structure, composed of a projecting square mass in the centre, and of uniform adjuncts, which, at right-angles that opposed those of the outer wall, fell backward to make an inner court-yard. The centre was surmounted by a cupola of light and elegant architecture, and was built over an open archway, through which Captain Pendergast still looked into that inner-court-yard, nay, far beyond it, across pleasure-grounds, terraces, and gardens, until the receding and opening valley, which partly formed the distance, was crossed by shadowy hills ; and over these, the round red moon just then began to rise, and a mutilated statue elevated upon a pedestal, in the remote pleasure-ground of the mansion, cut blackly and sharply against her disk.

This, then, was the building the traveller had come far to visit ; but a second glance informed him that it no longer was in a state to give a welcome to any visiter. We have noticed that its avenue-gates were shattered, and the wall of its outer-court in ruins ; now he saw that the walls of the mansion itself were partially blackened with fire, its battlements broken, its windows dashed in, its halls silent, its hearths desolate.

CHAPTER III.

" Friends of ours have been here, John Sharpe," said Captain Pendergast, after he and his servant had stood some time at the bottom of the avenue, observing the ruin.

" Hu, ugh !" chuckled John, " and I believe you guess at the truth, Captain : it does look just like a place that the true-blues had a night in. I wonder what old Romish grandee yon was in his day : hu, ugh ! troth, just."

" John, you are a bigot."

" Well, Captain ; 'tis worthy of a fresh feed till the nose-comforter, howsoever—ugh, ugh !" he continued, slowly and methodically taking out of his pouch, while the reins rested

on the neck of his tired and patient steed, a little leatherne packet, containing, under many careful foldings, a piece of tobacco, a flint and steel, and touch-paper ; which latter, he said, no man but himself knew how to make, " and it took the spark only for showing the flant and steel til it, or just letting it hear ae clash atween 'em."

" Though, upon second thought, I hope you may be only fool, John," resumed his master.

" And it's just well to be any thing, these times," still chuckled the old soldier, again glancing up at the ruin, and then sinking his chin on his breast, with a repeated " hu, ugh ! " of an increasing joyful character, while he proceeded very systematically to fill his pipe, and " show" the flint and steel to his touch-paper.

" And yet, within yonder walls I had hoped to find a friend —or one whom I had foredoomed to be a friend," resumed Pendergast, speaking out his own thoughts, rather than now addressing his attendant. John Sharpe heard the words, notwithstanding, and commented upon them too, with a fresh chuckle of exceeding delight, for which the reader can account by recollecting former allusions to his thoughts and feeling.

" Be silent, sir, and advance with me to note if any living being yet hides in the ruin," said his master, offended at his freedom, and in a tone which John knew how to value. Both arrived, accordingly, at the gate at the top of the avenue ; but here their proposed investigation seemed stopped ; for a few paces from the piers, they encountered a wide ditch, filled with water, over which, at the point they commanded, a bridge had once been thrown, although at present only some of its fragments lay on either bank.

In this dilemma, Captain Pendergast commanded John Sharpe to join him in shouting loudly towards the desolate building. The deep and prolonged echoes which answered them, as well from the hills and woods around as from its own walls, were so startling, that master and man paused and listened to their cadences as if they had been attending to an answer shouted back by real voices. Night began to fall rapidly. The extensive and shattered pile grew blacker as the rising moon rolled her chaste glory over the hills and sky at its back. Her rays came streaming through more than one window-hole of the front, either because another window in the rear, exactly confronting it, allowed free passage to the beam, or that the wall of the rear itself was partially thrown down.

The benighted travellers mutually disliking their present situation, although neither expressed their sensations, shouted again and again ; and at last Captain Pendergast thought that a figure darkened the moonshine at one of the windows spoken of, disappearing again in a twinkling, and allowing the beautiful light to stream on. He asked his attendant if he had noticed such an occurrence. John said he had not ; but while they discussed the point, both now were aware that a man certainly stood in the space of another window, which remained in black shadow, and seemed watching them. Perhaps, when he first appeared at the moon-lit window, this person quickly remembered his conspicuous position, and had left it to pursue his observations in a less exposed one. Indeed, the faintest indication of a figure was at present given to our friends ; for its dress seemed as black as the shadow which encompassed it.

Their shouts arose shriller. Still the echoes alone made answer ; and the figure did not move.

"The stony-hearted Papish!" said John Sharpe ; "what, if we give ae bark til him, Captain?" showing a pistol.

"On your life, no!" answered his master ; "the man only fears us—we shall prove him a friend."

"What's that?" continued John, chucking back his head, as something cut with a sharp sound through the air close by his and his Captain's face : "Wooden shoes to my feet, your honour! but if we will not bark til him, the Papish is whistling til us."

"How, John?"

"'Twas a cross-bow arrow, Captain, or say I don't know a brass sixpence from a silver coin of the same name ; for, though such unchristian weapons be out of vogue in fair campaigning, your honour remembers that woodsmen, gamekeepers and their like, still practise with them, and Romish woodsmen most of all so—Ha!" a second time the same twitting sound passed the speaker, and he suddenly caught his nose between his fingers and thumb, as if it had been grazed ; "I'm touched, now, Captain," he continued, "by one of the like viperish, Papish skin-scratchers : and now, of a surety, your honour will not forbear me from sending over our compliments in return."

"Hold, yet!—the man yonder has not stirred a finger ; I have been watching him as attentively as he seems watching us," cried Pendergast ; "but, by Heaven, John ! we must turn round here to the left!" a third arrow struck the Captain's saddle and was now quivering in it—"See ! the assassin,

or assassins, shelter at the edge of the wood, across the meadow—one has just glanced in among the trees—face round with me, but stand steadily first, and a shot each, before advancing.”

These words were little more than said, when the sharp explosion of the travellers’ pistols rang through the stilled and shadowed solitude, calling up all its echoes, until the two shots seemed followed by a volley. The next second, rooks cawed in the trees down the avenue, and other birds screamed in the woods ; and at the same time Pendergast believed he caught a sudden exclamation from the ruin. Confronting it quickly, he perceived that the dark figure had abandoned the window-space ; and while he looked, a stir in the moonshine in the inner court-yard drew his glance, and he saw a person clad in long drapery, hurry across the ground at the pedestal of the statue before mentioned.

“ Prime and load, and advance now !” cried Captain Pendergast ; and he and his valiant man were soon galloping across the open space at their left to the skirt of the great wood. In their career, a fourth arrow struck off John Sharpe’s hat, and he and his master immediately answered by again discharging their pistols.

“ Stop wit de hand!—shentlemans stop ! *graw-gal-boy* ! not none but *graw-gal-boy* in wood !” shouted an old man’s voice from another direction. The accents were those of one in great distress and agitation, and vehement supplication.

Captain Pendergast halted, and cried “ Stand !” as he saw the speaker run to cross his way, throwing up his hands, and still shouting uninterrupted.

“ Och, ay, sirs !” and the old man stood still accordingly, while the travellers closed upon him ; Pendergast, now jumping from his saddle, and leaving his horse in John Sharpe’s care—“ Och, ay, stands—all—all he bids—but he not hurt boy—good, poor gorçoон—in wood for kill bird—rabbit—nien at all more—*graw-gal-boy* !” and the advocate still spoke and gesticulated in great emotion. Pendergast stood close to him in the moonshine. The old man was quaintly attired. He wore, in part, the very clumsiest, rustic imitation of the civil attire of the day ; namely, brogues, hose of a dingy red colour, and breeches bagged and slashed above the knees ; but his long-skirted, collarless coat was of a cut that intimated the character of a servant or follower of a great family, as also did its broad, crested buttons ; and on his white-haired head was a hunting-cap.

"I understand not your speech," said Captain Pendergast, in reply to the effort of the old Southern peasant to express himself in a language with which he was very little acquainted ; "at the least, your meaning is doubtful to me; but if you comprehend plain English, when spoken, better than you can speak it, know that I have been shot at with arrows from yon wood-side, while here, waited on by my servant, upon a friendly business."

"Sure, ay, ould Rory knows ; only not shot for kill—arrow shot at rabbit—ay—"

"And how many sportsmen are in the wood?" interrupted Pendergast. Methinks you spoke of a boy ; what men are with him?"

"Och! sure nien man to him—nien! nien! nien left—ochown!"

"Can I see the boy?"

"Anan?" the old man stept back, frightened, and glanced anxiously towards the wood : "Can him see boy, aroon? it's what him say is that?"

"Yes ; and you need fear nothing on his account or your own : I have told you that my visit to this wild place is friendly."

"Avoch! wild place! ay!—it's wild place it is, now! wirra-strue! ochown!" and he abandoned himself to lamentations, which Pendergast thought might be partly sincere, partly affected to evade answering the direct inquiry. And John Sharpe seemed of the same opinion ; for having come up, leading his master's horse, he said suddenly—

"Fule of a Papish! reply to his honour's question."

"Silence, Sharpe," cried Captain Pendergast angrily, as the old man looked still more frightened, "and offer no other word on this matter. My servant is wayward," he continued in a mild voice to old Rory ; "but I once more assure you, on the faith of a gentleman, that we are here as friends."

"Friends! avoch! nien friends come now—nien alive to come—sure, no—ochown! and sure nien ever at all, to dress in cap and feather, like him honour."

"Nay, old man, this grows tedious ; I am tired with my long journey hither, and not in the humour for cross-purposes, especially when assured of my own intentions ; so we will cut the discourse short. If the boy you speak of be, as I suspect and hope he is, the youngest and only living son of your old master, Sir Red—."

"Och, nien, nien!" interrupted the old servant, gaining the

height of his terror ; “ never at all ! What him do here to ould Rory ? sure, nien ; graw-gal-boy, Rory’s own sisther’s son, here for having shoot in wood—hi-hoo ! i-hoo !” he continued, facing round to the trees, as he shouted shrilly, and clapped his hands—“ be going home, Murtach, ma-chree, to mother, over hill : it’s the dark, a-vich, and nien more arrows till the morrow at morning !”

“ If Sir Redmond O’Burke’s son listens to me,” resumed Pendergast, also speaking loudly, “ I advise, I entreat him, not to withdraw, but rather advance to my side : I bear a message from his father.”

Old Rory uttered a cry of fearful astonishment at these words, and again clapped his hands. Another exclamation reached Pendergast from the wood’s edge. He turned his head quickly in the direction whence it came. The topmost boughs of one of the trees that skirted the wood were in motion, and presently a boy was seen clambering down from branch to branch, with great agility and earnestness : not waiting to slide along the trunk, he swung himself by the hands out of a branch some yards above the ground, alighted firmly on his feet, and quickly crossed the meadow in a direct line towards the travellers. He seemed about twelve ; tall for his years, and slight, but of elegant proportion ; and his erect air, his step, and the grace, if not graceful motion of his limbs, belied, to Pendergast’s mind, old Rory’s pretensions to a relationship with the young stranger.

As he came close, Pendergast noticed his attire with sorrow, because it bespoke his destitute situation. The boy wore a tight-fitting, long-backed, wide-skirted, coat of a velvet texture, and it had once been highly embroidered ; but the gold filigree work was now tarnished, and in part worn or rent off, and the garment itself burst in many places. He was bare-headed ; his light hair flowing in curls over his shoulders. The deep linen collar which folded down under his chin, seemed in a soiled state. His thighs and legs were covered with cloth and hose of as coarse materials as those worn by old Rory ; and like him, too, he trod in common Irish brogues. And yet, wretched as were the circumstances indicated by this ill-sorted union of the costume of better days, with that of present poverty, the boy showed in his whole expression nothing of a self-abasing consciousness of misfortune. On the contrary, as has been said in other words, his mien and step were high and proud ; and when he stopped suddenly, and confronted Captain Pendergast, the glowing eagerness of his eyes,

and the out-turning of his full, almost heavy lips, told that his poor appearance was quite forgotten, partly in a good opinion of himself, partly in the subject that engrossed and agitated his mind. A cross-bow and a quiver were slung at his back.

"The spawn of the scarlet b——!" muttered John Sharpe; "he dares come into our presence with the very weapons dangling ahint him."

And John, sucking his pipe ever more spitefully for each renewed glance, scowled at the young archer; and old Rory increased his outcries of fear and lamentation at every step that brought him nearer. But, unheeding either, the boy look straightly and firmly into Captain Pendergast's eyes, as he said, the moment he stopped short, "I am Sir Redmond O'Burke's only living son—who are you that speak of a message from my father?"

"His friend; Pendergast, of Pendergast Hall, young sir?"

"His friend? my father had no friend of that name, or wearing that livery," he added, peering closely at the Captain's military attire.

"He had not, I grant you, to your knowledge, or before he left home for the wars; and yet I was his *last* friend."

"How,—would you tell me that my father changed sides, sir? would you dare tell me that?" asked young O'Burke very indignantly.

"No: he was as true a gentleman as ever proved loyal, through thick and thin, to an indifferent cause."

"Indifferent cause, sir? but I pause not now on your word," he continued eagerly, while tears gathered in his eyes—"what message do you bear from my father?"

"That you ride with me from this place, and take up your abode in my house."

"Ah!" cried the boy, jumping back; "a trick to make me a prisoner!"

"Young gentleman," expostulated Pendergast, "be not so self-opinioned: these wars are over; peace reigns in the land, with some honour to your father's cause; and I could not, dare not make you a prisoner, if I would."

"And that is true?" young O'Burke advanced again: "But am I to meet my father in your house, sir?" he asked in a voice not confident with hope or expectation.

"No, my boy," answered Pendergast solemnly.

"And why not? where is he? Oh! we have heard some rumours here; part from friends, part from enemies; but all so loose, that we could not, would not credit them! Yet now,

sir, you, I fear, bring us the tidings, indeed! I call to mind your words—You were my father's *last* friend, you said? Where arose your friendship?"

"At Aughram."

"And there he engaged you to bear me this message?"

"There; and it was his *last message*, too."

"The boy, shrieking like a woman, suddenly dropped, sitting on the grass, covered his face with his hand, and while he rocked to and fro, continued to utter the shrill laments that, at his years, expressed the orphan's grief for the loss of a beloved parent, mixed up with a cutting sense of helplessness and destitution. Old Rory knelt at his side, held him in his arms, and instead of trying to sooth his anguish, added to it by his own wild and almost fearful cries. Captain Pendergast, regarding the pair in silence, felt his own tears flow. "Here," he thought, "here, in the depths of the domains of his fathers, and within sight of their ruined house, and only supported by that last faithful old follower,—here, in the light of the moon, houseless and ragged, it is indeed sad news for the boy to hear, and a sad scene for me to witness.—Alight, John Sharpe, and assist me in comforting this lad and old man."

Without a word, John descended from his saddle; and, notwithstanding all his habitual crabbedness of feeling, his master heard him snuffle, in evidence that even his eyes were infected.

"Rory," pursued Pendergast, "let us all stand on our feet, and look about for some place of shelter for the night; I am hungry and thirsty, and wish you to purchase me food and drink." Rory felt a heavy purse thrust into his hand; he looked up stupidly; ceased weeping, and arose. "Prevail on my young friend to take my arm;—my hand, first, Rory," continued the speaker, "be assured I am anxious he should love me. His father saved my life twice in one day; I could not preserve his, afterwards, at the turn of the battle; but, Sir Redmond O'Burke bequeathed him to me, and I have sworn he shall be a son to me; and the oath was made, Rory, above the grave in which my own hands assisted to stretch, side by side, this young boy's father, and my own only son." These words, as had been intended, found their way to young O'Burke's ear, and also produced the desired effect. He uncovered his face, looked up at Pendergast, and saw his tears in the moonlight; and then he jumped to his arms, and gave him embrace for embrace.

CHAPTER IV.

"I HAVE no roof to offer you, sir," said young O'Burke, soon afterwards, "but Rory Laherty's den in the heart of the forest ; and that is not as good a one as even he has been used to : we made it, with our four hands, since his house was burnt down."

Expressing himself contented with any accommodation, Pendergast requested his young friend to show the way through the wood. John Sharpe, his gentler feelings passed and gone, and now holding a gruff, quaint silence, followed with old Rory, who, still agitated and afflicted, kept up an incessant account, in broken English, of the recent sufferings of his master's family ; no one word of which (when understood), excited aught save the contempt of the hearer ; except, perhaps, that now and then his "ugh, hee !" hinted a gratification to his mechanical hatreds and aversions, arising out of some peculiar instance of the severities acted towards the retainers of Sir Redmond's house, by the detachment of King William's army which had been despatched to attack and destroy it.

While Pendergast, leaning on the boy, approached the wood, he heard John Sharpe exclaim suddenly, "Captain, look close ! 'ware ambuseade !'

His master, glancing forward, certainly saw some person glide from the skirt of the wood into its dark intricacies, and disappear. It was, he believed, the same individual, at least one wearing the same singular dark drapery, whom he had before observed in the window-space of the ruined mansion. He stopped, and asked the boy, "Who was that?"

Young O'Burke said he had seen no one.

"My young sir—but no, tell me your christian name before I speak farther."

"Patrick," answered the boy frankly, though a little surprised at his companion's remarkable manner.

"Well, then, Patrick, tell me—were you alone in the wood a while ago ?"

"All alone, sir," still frankly.

"And sent the four arrows across the meadow with your own hand ?"

"With my own hand, sir ; and *could* have sent ten after them, mayhap with better aim, for I ever grow better at the cross-bow after a waste shot or two ; ay, sir, and *would*, but for Rory ; for I had no thought to wait to be dragged, like a dog, from my hiding-place, and tied neck and heels on a garron, and led off to be murdered by men come, as I then believed, to have the life of the last O'Burke."

"Very proper, and I do not quarrel with your cross-bow play, though I had well nigh had the odds against me in it. But resolve me another question. What people can be now in the wood, to your knowledge ?"

"None, sir. I am sure there is never a man, gentle or simple, dares show his head within miles of my father's house, barring Rory Laherty and myself ; or, supposing there were, I or he should know of them ; and, in truth, we know of none."

"And yet I saw a man move into the wood before us, and one, I reckon, whom I have seen an hour ago, in another place."

"If so it be, sir, he is but some poor runaway from his own burnt home to ours here. Doubt nothing in any case ; all such must be friends of an O'Burke, and of an O'Burke's friend."

"You know Rory to be thoroughly honest ?" pursued Pendergast.

"Is it *Rory*, ~~stranger~~ *Rory* ! my own poor old foster-father ! reared up in my family since he was a child ! Come, sir—and my only friend, since—oh come, sir ! By the soul of my father!"—the boy again burst into vehement tears—"Rory and I will fight against any foe of yours, and not abet them."

"I believe it, Patrick ;" Pendergast pressed his arm—"so, show us your wood-nest."

In a few moments all were winding, or rather scrambling, their way through the forest ; for as yet no path was visible, and the brushwood proved thick and matted, and the trunks of the trees very close together ; so close, indeed, that although the October winds had begun to thin the foliage of their branches, not a ray of moonshine could penetrate to the adventurers through the massive screen overhead.

In some time, however, Pendergast caught through the trees, at a distance, the broken beams of the moon, and the party soon escaped from the woody depths upon a patch of comparatively open ground, where the grass was short and fresh, and dotted with quivering light and shade. In its centre

appeared a small pile of stones, loosely huddled together, and surmounted by a few more, shaped into the rude semblance of a cross : near at hand was a little bubbling spring. John Sharpe started at the sight of the primitive altar ; and, to Captain Pendergast's surprise, so did Patrick O'Burke and his old fosterfather. Then they addressed each other in Irish, and their tones seemed those of surprise and inquiry.

"Have you not passed this way before ?" asked Pendergast. The boy said, "Yes, every day."

"But not seen the stones till now ?"

"No," his young friend replied, though they could not have escaped his notice had they previously been there ; in fact, they must have been piled up within the last few hours, and hence his and old Rory's surprise.

"And piled up by the man I have twice observed near us," continued Pendergast : "but lead on."

"We are at home," said Patrick.

"A leaky roof, truly," observed the Captain, glancing up at the blue sky.

"You shall see, sir."

There had been a natural pit, or hollow, almost in the middle of the spread of open ground : a gradual descent between steep and almost perpendicular banks. Over this, Rory and his foster-son had laid strong branches, and thin boughs, and lastly sods, until the hollow quite disappeared, and the whole seemed an equal surface. A few holes, invisible to any unsuspicious eye, were left, however, to let air and light in, and smoke out ; and at the point where the descent began, the architects had preserved an orifice some feet wide, which, every time they entered or abandoned the retreat, was carefully hidden with fresh-pulled boughs, so disposed as to appear growing out of the earth. Neither seemed to have contemplated that, although their hiding-place might not stand much chance of being descried, it might, nevertheless, be very suddenly invaded by any wanderer who, as much to his own peril as to theirs, should happen to take for granted what they prided themselves upon making so plausible—namely, that the frail roof of the den was firm ground. But no matter for this deficiency of their plan : such was the abode into which the last son of Sir Redmond O'Burke invited his new protector to descend.

When the bushes were removed, a rude ladder appeared at the mouth of the orifice which they had concealed. All was pitchy dark below. Rory, after a few words in Irish, pre-

cipitated himself first into the rayless abyss, and the rest of the party awaited his preliminary arrangements to make them welcome. Presently the void became illuminated by an intermittent flame, and he was heard puffing at his fire. Pendergast and the abhorring and still suspicious John Sharpe, then descended the ladder; Patrick O'Burke stopped half-way down to pull the boughs over the orifice.

"Let it not trouble you, Patrick, except your thought be to stuff the wind out," said Pendergast: "the day has passed when you needed to fear detection, you or any friend of yours; and truly, our only need for hiding ourselves in this pit to-night, depends on the supposition that there is no better resting-place at hand."

"Nor is there, sir," answered Patrick; "no cabin on my father's lands was left standing."

"Ugh, ugh!" commented John Sharpe. His master sufficiently corrected him with a look, and ordered him to assist Rory in some cooking process which the old man was undertaking at his turf-en fire; then continued:—"Well, Patrick, 'twas a pity; yet no more than others would have done on my lands in Far North, if it had come to their turn: so never heed the hole, for the present; it will help to rid us of the smoke of our fire, which, after all, looks comfortable. Your hand, while you turn in the ladder."

"Queen of heaven!" cried Patrick, grasping tightly the sides of the ladder, as with his back to Pendergast, he looked up to the black orifice. His friend also looked up thither, and saw a pale, wan, strongly-marked face gazing through the opening. The Captain's first impulse was to draw a pistol, while old Rory clapped his hands, and ejaculated as usual, and John Sharpe seconded his master; but a steady observation of the face told that it could not be an enemy's. Want and misery solely seemed to give it its startling expression; and its sunken eyes glared only with fear at the strangers, and with hunger at the viands now cooking on Rory's fire.

"Hold my legs tight, or I shall fall, sir," continued Patrick.

"What, boy! afraid of such a poor hungry man as that?" said Pendergast.

"It is no man, but the ghost of Father James, my father's chaplain; he was slain in his flight from our house."

"A papish priest's ghost!" muttered John Sharpe; "hu, ugh; and as it must needs be like to himself, notwithstanding it is so muckle the less harmful, I was curious to see, for the first time in my life, the ——"

"Keep silence, I warn you, sir," interrupted Pendergast ; "this is no ghost, Patrick, but your old friend himself, or rather I suppose, a moiety of him, come to prefer a claim on our hospitality, with a good appetite."

"Food, food, in charity's name!" said the new-comer, in weak accents. In a few minutes, Pendergast had helped the starving man down the ladder, placed him sitting on dry rushes and moss, near the fire, and assisted by Patrick, gave him to eat of the first slice of a haunch of venison, now partially cooked, according to Rory Laherty's best method. And in the person of Father James, Pendergast was assured he saw the individual who had appeared watching him and Sharpe from the ruin, and afterward on the edge of the wood. He remarked the wanderer's dark-brown ecclesiastical undress, and remembered the ample drapery of the suspicious figure.

While Father James ate, and afterward drank, his eyes fixed with a stupified recognition upon young O'Burke. The boy, experiencing much pity and reverence, and perhaps still under the influence of his recent terror, regarded him with a stare almost as vacant. Presently, the priest's eyes grew heavy, the lids often falling and opening again ; then he mechanically changed his look to the fire ; feebly stretched out his hands to the blaze, rubbed them, looked again at Patrick, and smiled ; and then his head nodded to his breast, and with the weak smile on his lips, he fell asleep. Rory and Pendergast laid him down gently, and at his ease, upon the soft couch of rushes and moss, the old campaigner covering his limbs with his riding cloak ; a merciful act, which drew from John Sharpe one of his most expressive nasal grunts ; and "let him sleep his fill," said Pendergast, "he will wake up a new man : meantime, Rory, we can judge of your cookery."

With an almost savage energy of action, for which every thing he did was remarkable, the old gamekeeper proceeded to dispose his viands in eating form. The venison was supported by hares, rabbits, and wood-pigeons, all roasted, and not very free of turf-ashes, nor equally browned on their surfaces ; and Rory once more changing his character into that of waiting-man, laid his fare upon flat stones, previously made hot, and ostentatiously placed a single knife, a hunting one, beside the venison. He had previously put a bottle of French wine in Father James's hands ; now he produced half a dozen more, of different kinds, adding at the bottom of the board, where John Sharpe and he were to sit, a little gallon barrel of brandy. Pendergast expressed his surprise at the presence of

these last good accompaniments to a substantial dinner ; and young Patrick informed him that they had been stealthily brought to the den by Rory, who, in his troubled and objectless visits to the adjacent ruin, since the military abandoned it, fortunately discovered a wine-cellar, into which the visitors had failed to penetrate.

While the two new friends spoke apart, Rory was watching his young master's eye. Their glances met, and Rory made an expressive sign.

" Why, yes, foster-father," said the boy, smiling sadly, " make your very heart glad, and bring it out at once ; the only fragment of finery he has been able to snatch at in the day of waste, sir," he continued, addressing his guest.

Rory ran to the side of the den, and began displacing some huge stones piled up against it. John Sharpe laid down the leg of a hare which he had been tearing with his teeth, and watched his rapid motions with some suspicion. Presently appeared a hole, which the old man's exertions had cleared, and into this he thrust his arm at full length, and drew forth what seemed a bundle of twisted hay ; but finally he produced from the careful envelope a massive silver cup, supported by three legs, highly embossed, and showing the crest of the O'Burkes. It was quickly placed on the ground at his young master's right-hand, and supper went on.

Patrick O'Burke, though but a boy, courteously attended to his guest. Rory Laherty " made much " of John Sharpe, who, wrought upon chiefly by the good food and liquor, and at length, a little by the old man's eager hospitality, condescended to relax the austere rigidness of his features, and to subside into the kind of contemptuous ironical mirth which he sometimes exhibited. While Rory continued to overheap the flat stone before him, or refilled his horn—" Thanks til ye, mon," John would grumble, slowly smacking his lips as he stared straightforward to his master, just smiling in a sort that seemed to say, " How stricken by our presence the Papishes be, poor bodies ! but the fare's no' so bad neither : so, come." Had he known Rory better, he would not have felt so flattered by his civilities. The old fellow was every whit as shrewd as he, and strange to assert, thought John Sharpe as great a block-head as John Sharpe thought Rory Laherty : nay, they hated and despised each other with equal force on both sides, although each made the egotistical mistake of imagining that it was impossible his companion could respond his sentiments ; or, it should rather be said, such an idea never entered into the head of

either. Their mutual oversight, as well as their mutual rancour, sprang from their ignorance. Had Rory thought less uncharitably, and more justly, of the heresy of Protestantism ; and had John Sharpe known an iota of Rory's creed, they would have proved better friends : and again, had they previously observed the different manners in which subdued, though strongly-felt sentiments were indicated in their different communities—that is, had John had opportunities of studying the Roman Catholic people of the south, and Rory the Protestant people of the north (than whom scarce any two of the nations of the earth can differ more widely), John's sententiousness and sober gruffness would not have seemed stupidity to his entertainer, nor Rory's garrulity and vivacious energy something of the same kind to the entertained person ; at the same time that neither manner could have long hidden the mental reserves which both were now so successful in disguising. Such are the mistakes occasioned by not knowing the world.

But, apart from the mere habitual shrewdness of Rory in veiling his dislike and contempt under a guise of vehement politeness, that might well pass for folly, he had at present a particular motive for so doing. He hoped that his young master was to be served by the new-comers ; and he would as soon have put his arm to roast for them, in the turf-en fire, as by word or look convey any offence that might mar the fortunes of the last son of Sir Redmond O' Burke. In perfect candour, he was farther helped on in his amiable duplicity—(there is such a thing, even if Rory does not deserve having it said of him,)—by a lurking fear that the friendship proffered by the strangers was hollow, and assumed only for the purpose of entrapping and destroying his foster-son and himself.

After the meal had proceeded some time, Patrick O' Burke, raising the massive cup to his lips, which now brimmed with wine, said, in a low tone that would not disturb the sleeping priest—" Mr. Pendergast, it does not beseem my years to drink bumpers of claret, and I, therefore, stand excused if I but put my lips to this cup : but my lips I will put to it, to toast your health, sir, and welcome to O' Burke's country."

" Thanks, my boy ; and I will take it now, to drink to our future love and good fellowship in Far North."

" I join you, in the heart, sir ; and yet it will be a black day, the day I leave the place I was born in, and know so well, for one that holds none of my kindred, and that I have never seen : the fields, and hills, and streams, and glins, Rory,"

turning to his foster-father, while his eyes moistened, "every stick and stone of which you and I could tell—ay, to the very yellow pebbles on the bottom of the clear brook in the summer,—and I to go alone, Rory, to make acquaintance with new hills, and glins, and streams."

"Rory shall come with us, if you like," interrupted Pendergast. The proposition dried the tears of Patrick and the old man, and the latter, jumping up with a joyful cry, ran to embrace his young master; and then he knelt and kissed, not in a mere formal way, but twenty times over, Captain Pendergast's hand.

"The blubbering Papish," grumbled Sharpe: "and what does your honour precesely intend that Mr. Rory should do, in the bonny North?" he continued, addressing his master.

"Just any thing he is most fit and able to do for his bread, John."

"Troth, jest," pursued John; "and, doubtless, that will consist in service upon the body of his young master, there."

"Ay—nien, Rory says," interrupted the object of Sharpe's questions;—"him larn, Sir Patrick," bowing to his foster-son—"him larn, Sir Patrick, shoot more rabbit—more bird—sure, ay—always more—but never nien service else, Rory know—can make nien, indeed, ochown."

"He speaks true, sir," said Patrick; "old Rory would prove but a clumsy body-man, and, moreover, the want of liberty, the want of sun and air, ay, and shower and storm, and a country-side to roam over, would soon kill the old man, I fear," he added in a whisper.

"Then, let Rory be our gamekeeper, John," resumed Pendergast, smiling with an expressive meaning at his man; "it seems the office he best can fill at Pendergast Hall."

Patrick and Rory were again delighted; but John Sharpe answered only in a dry way, although he felt anguish within him: "It's like, so; nevertheless, your honour used to think that one John Sharpe could fill the place, too; troth, jest."

"But, surely, can fill others as well, to a tittle, John; and as M'Nevin is dead, I had a thought of making my late gamekeeper my future land-steward."

"See there til it!" resumed the new officer, his eyes opening widely upon his master, in mixed surprise and pleasure; "thanks til your honour," he continued, when a selfish abstraction gave him time, and even yet the words had little energy in them; "and maybe, I can't, as your honour says;" now he grew, according to him, pleasant; "maybe, I can't fill auld

Sam M'Nevin's shoes ; no harm in trying, howsomever ; hugh, ugh !”

“ Well, John ; report what hour it is.”

“ Come out, Tell-truth,” chuckled John, becoming still more mirthful, as, slowly and cautiously, he drew from his pocket the article he so encomiastically addressed. At first appeared, suspended to a steel chain of massive proportions, something in a brown leather case ; which case, smiling all the time, he slid off ; then the eye rested on another leather case, of different texture from the first ; and finally, he exposed to view a watch, of the diameter of, and almost as round as a twenty-four pound shot, of which the back was encrusted with some green composition ; and that back, as well as the glass of the huge time-piece, underwent furbishing from the loose cuff of his jacket, ere John continued, smiling affectionately at the hands of the dial, “ Preceesely half of the hour, and the saxth minute after eleven of the clock at night, by ane watch that’s as true as the sun ; troth, jest ! by which account,” proceeding to envelope his infallible oracle again ; “ as I reckon, his Papish reverence, yon, has enjoyed indifferent sound sleep these three hours last passed ;—though, bless my gracious eyes ! he sleeps no longer, nevertheless !” added John, staring at the priest, and starting in some alarm, as he found the eyes of the supposed sleeper fixed on his.

“ No, friend, I do not sleep ; and if I have slept, it was against my will and my purpose,” answered Father James, rapidly, and in a husky voice ; “ and to the unintended lapse I owe, doubtless, the ill chance of falling into merciless hands,” he continued, his eyes expressing a wild and incoherent agitation ; “ but since it is so, welcome the fate that, often narrowly ‘scaped, gives me rest at last ; and I but pray——”

“ Father James !” interrupted young O’Burke, who had stepped softly to his back, and as he spoke, he caught his old friend by the arm. Without looking behind, or, as it seemed, recollecting the sound of a well-known voice, the ecclesiastic shrieked hoarsely, flung himself on his face, and in broken, but still rapid sentences, went on—“ That you shoot me, or sabre me, on the open plat, in the wood—my sole prayer ! that ye drag me up—fling me at the foot of the cross of stones—I raised the sign of hope, there, with my own hands, since the night-fall—we were all so much in need of a chapel for worship—and then I went to seek some that would be glad to meet me in it—an old man and a young boy——”

“ They are at your side ; see,” resumed Patrick ; “ feel my

hand, Father James—hear my voice, your old pupil's voice——”

Again crying out, feebly though wildly, the priest knelt up, caught Patrick in his arms, and continued, “ You in the toils, too ! and for me ! doubtless, for me ! you sought to save your poor tutor, Patrick, and now you share his lot ! May God forgive me !—But oh, I do not deserve forgiveness for this ! I should not have wandered here to peril you ! The rocks and the caves were my fitter abode—and there, Patrick, there I could have baffled them for ever and a day, good boy ! Ay, ever since the flight, on the first morning, my limbs got the strength and fleetness of your own stag-hounds ! when they showed themselves at a distance, among the clouds of the hills, I have ventured leaps, Patrick, from rock to rock, that would put your feats to shame ! ” he now whispered less distinctly than before, and the vague smiles which accompanied his words bespoke his shattered state of mind.

Seclusion, indeed, severe study, and a total ignorance of the world, had, previous to the recent shock it received, divested that mind of the power of resisting a great and unexpected calamity. Pendergast, from a conversation with Patrick, as well as from his own remarks, saw how the case stood, and applied himself to console the sufferer. At first he allowed the boy to try his unassisted efforts ; and, after some time, Father James seemed disposed to believe that his pupil and himself were not encompassed by enemies, or placed in immediate or deadly peril. But it was a much harder task to give him a single clear perception of the fact that, according to the Treaty of Limerick, so lately signed, his religion, and he, as a minister of that religion, were safe from future hostility, and entitled to a recognition and a place in the land. The priest smiled again at such assertions, and it was evident that his wavering recollection of what he had gone through, merely because he was a Catholic priest, now made him incredulous, at once, and incapable, by re-exciting his mind, of deliberative reasoning upon this topic. Captain Pendergast seconded Patrick, in vain, giving himself as authority for the good tidings both sought to impress. The clergyman told Patrick he was imposed upon, and Pendergast that he wished to create a delusion for some terrible purpose.

At length Patrick adduced, as strong though indirect proof of the truth, the proposal of Captain Pendergast, a Protestant gentleman, and an officer bearing King William’s commission, to convey him, Patrick, and his old foster-father, openly to his

residence in the North, and there give them countenance and protection : and with fresh tears the boy related the events which had prompted Pendergast to offer such an arrangement. And now the listener's reason seemed finally to be appealed to through his feelings. At the mention of Sir Redmond O'Burke's death, and of the last words between him and his foe-friend, tutor and pupil mingled their tears ; and, after yielding to a long fit of grief, the clergyman looked into Pendergast's face more expressively than he had before done, and returned the friendly pressure which King William's officer meant for his reassurance.

For some minutes ensuing, his lips moved as if in prayer ; then he glanced around from one to another of the persons who surrounded him, and up to the opening into the retreat, as if his mind was beginning to get back the power of making distinct observations, and comprehending the present by the past. Suddenly he started, and again growing terrified and doubtful, asked who they were who had fired shots at him when he stood in a window of the castle—"some hours before—or days—or yesterday—in the evening—or at the dawn, he was not assured which ?"

Pendergast, frankly admitting that he and his attendant fired the shots alluded to, proceeded to explain that no pistol had been pointed at him. The spirit-broken and feeble-minded man shook his head, and was silent. Patrick and Rory, while John Sharpe did not vouchsafe a word, upheld Pendergast's story to be true ; still he would not or, again shaken in his reasoning capabilities, could not be convinced.

"Sham friends," he muttered—"heretic friends : God pity us, God guide us ;—and you are going with them, Patrick ? With *them*, and to the black North ? where there is neither priest nor prayers of your own ? ah ! " This new view of the subject seemed wholly to divert him from every other, and while he continued to rave upon it, seemed fast reducing him to utter imbecility of mind. Pendergast hastened to break up and rout the thick-coming delusions, somewhat impatient, at length, of the poor priest's unreasonable pertinacity, though still he pitied him, and as his words will show, wished to comfort him.

"Father James, since so my adopted boy calls you, listen to a few plain words from a plain man. Patrick O'Burke is meant fair, ay, fair in every particular ; and in that of his religious opinions, as well as in every other. It has never entered into

my head to assail even what I must consider the prejudices of his education."

"Impure errors, superstitions, idolatries, crying blasphemies ; troth, jest," emended Sharpe.

"Be silent, John, or I will break your pate," said his master ; "or more, you get no land stewardship at my hands. I am followed by a bigot fool, sir," re-addressing the priest ; "only he ever says more harm and offence than he has brains, or even heart, bad as he is, to mean or feel : heed him not, but still give me your attention. This boy shall live in his father's faith, so far as I can help it ; I swear it to him and to you by the word and honour of a gentleman, a soldier, and a christian ; I swear it by his father's memory, and by the love and awe I bear that memory. And he shall hear his own prayers too, and say them with his own priest, if you are willing. Come with him to the North. You have been his tutor also, and he will still need your instructions ; and even on this account, I say to you, come with him,"

This speech, as the speaker hoped it would have done, arrested and fixed the vague ideas of the person to whom it was addressed. After some farther conversation, he acknowledged himself convinced, and gratefully willing to accompany his beloved Patrick wherever their new patron should command. With a little entreaty, he was prevailed upon to assist in consuming the portion of supper which his unexpected awaking, and its results, had left to cool ; and with an intellect considerably re-arranged, though still disposed to shake to pieces at the slightest start, he laid himself down to take a fresh sleep. All followed his example in good heart, except John Sharpe, who, as he plucked his short pipe from his tenacious and reluctant teeth, to prepare himself for slumber, uttered a groan, which, to his master's ear, protested against all the proceedings of the night, and, as it were, cried shame upon them, and appealed against them to a higher tribunal.

CHAPTER V.

A CHEERY October sun came streaming down through the open orifice, and, and the minor crannies of the half-subterranean abode, to awaken the sleepers, and bid them be up and

doing. Old Rory awoke first, and set about preparing a morning meal ; his motions being less vehement than usual, out of deference to his guests, whom he would fain allow to slumber on, until they should waken of their own accord.

But the watchful habits of Captain Pendergast and his boy yet slept profoundly, John Sharpe was commanded by master to ascend the ladder, emerge into day, and look at their horses, whom John had tied to two trees the previous night.

" And move softly, John, so as not to startle our friend here," whispered Pendergast ; " and if you have need to speak, let it be under your breath."

The old dragoon slowly crept up the ladder, and when his eyes came upon a level with the opening, and that he could see out over the patch of cleared ground abroad, his captain observed him stop short, and heard him mutter in great indignation.

" What's to do now, John Sharpe ?" still whispering.

" More papishes," answered John ; " and caught openly at their works of idolatry, troth jest ; but I 'se be one among 'em."

" Come down, sir," ordered his master, as he began to quicken his strides up the ladder, " and let me understand all this ; else ; in breach of what may now be called the land's law, you do something to endanger as well as disgrace yourself, and me whom you serve."

Grumbling sorely, John descended accordingly, and set apart in about the middle of the den, folding his arms hard, and sucking his short pipe disapprovingly.

Pendergast gained the step of the ladder upon which he had recently stood, and looking abroad as he had done, saw a very young and handsome man, in French military attire, kneeling upon one knee beside Father James's cross of stones, and holding in his hand his broad-brimmed peaked hat, from which streamed a profuse plume of white feathers, as his lips moved seemingly in prayer. The colour of health was high on his cheeks, and his blue eyes, although somewhat controlled by the present occupation of his mind, sparkled spiritedly, perhaps rather recklessly. His own brown hair, ample as the absurd periwig of the day, and disposed like one, fell adown his back ; and his dress was in the extreme of even French finery. Point-lace fringed his loosely-tied neckcloth ; he wore a highly-polished breast-piece, with pauldrons, over a white satin waistcoat, of which the lower edges, and those of its great

pocket-flaps, were edged with silver ; across the breast-piece came a red-riband ; his coat left open, and almost falling off, so liberal were its dimensions, and so wide its sleeves, was of light-blue velvet, and also embroidered ; very little of a tight-fitting small-clothes could be seen, his waistcoat hung so low, and his boots, after passing the knees, came up so high, gaping widely round the thigh, although they clung closely and foppishly to the leg ; and even his gloves were fine things, set off with fanciful needle-work, and deep fringe. Behind him stood two attendants, holding three horses, and wearing military uniform too, though of a more modest kind than that of their master ; but they were unarmed, while he had pistols in his belt, and a gay sword at his side.

Captain Pendergast was struck with the pleasure-giving face and air of the young officer—one, as he could determine at a glance, lately in the field for King James, and wearing attire supplied to that unhappy monarch, for his Irish generals and captains, by his loving cousin, Louis of France. Looking closer at the youthful devotee, he perceived that the star of nobility glittered on the left breast of his open coat ; and “Ay,” concluded Pendergast ; “one of the *to-be* peerages made by old Shamus, like his Sarsfield’s Lucan Lordship ; and now of about as much value as his brass sixpences : let the lad have the benefit of it, however, so far as he can, for me ; as well as of his stock-and-stone piety, here ; I’ll not disturb him till his devotions be over, such as they are.”

So saying, the unseen observer began to descend the ladder. He had made but a few steps, when he felt the clumsy and ill-contrived machine give way, and a second after, it fell to pieces on the bottom of the retreat, and he lay, somewhat stunned, though not hurt, beside it. The crash awoke the priest and young O’Burke, as their alarmed cries soon testified. John Sharpe, uttering a grunt, half of apprehension, half of content, at what, in his heart, he regarded as a just judgment upon his backsliding captain, prepared to stand up from his sulky position on the middle of the floor, or ground, when other voices were heard calling out, overhead, and the ensuing moment, treble consternation, wreck, and uproar, reigned around, abroad, below and above. It has been mentioned that old Rory and his youthful fellow-builder had not constructed their roof strong enough to resist an encroaching step on the outside ; and now came a proof of their want of foresight ; branches and boughs crackled, immediately over John Sharpe’s head, and he had scarce time to look up, when, with extended

arms and sprawling legs, the young gentleman, whom he and his master had lately seen kneeling at the cross, descended upon him, and landing astride on the shoulders of the confounded Enniskillener, suddenly grappled his ankles round John's throat, and brought him to the earth. And John only waited a return of his breath to roar lustily, although his teeth still held his pipe as tight as crab's claws could have done ; and to kick and cuff, and writhe, and curse, and imprecate as furiously as if he had never called himself of the elect and regenerated, or as if his every-day prudence had not subdued, on all ordinary occasions, the sinful habit which, among many others, he was fond of laying at the doors of blaspheming papishes, exclusively. The bewildered priest, awaking amid such horrors, temporarily relapsed into all his former frightened insanity, and seconded John Sharpe with startling cries ; Patrick O'Burke, losing his usual self-command, also cried aloud ; Captain Pendergast, scrambling amid broken branches and boughs, and unable to see any thing, called very angrily upon his servant, to cease his vile clamour, and come to his assistance ; the two attendants of the young and gallant intruder stood upon the verge of the partial chasm he had made, and joined their voices to the uproar below ; and Rory Laherty, who had been struck down by the limb of a tree,—one of his own vain rafters,—and whose fire and cookery lay hidden beneath a great portion of the roof, sent up the wildest ejaculations of all, clapping his hands whenever he could free them of the many surrounding impediments.

The causer of all this confusion was the only person who made no outcry about it, and he was also the first to muster his presence of mind. John Sharpe had just uttered the words—a climax to many previous ones—“Off wi’ ye from my throttle, ye unlucky papish ! off wi’ ye and be d—d, ye stone-worshipper, and ye house-breaker ! off wi’ ye, I tell ye, or, by —— ! ye shall have cold lead instead of hot meat, in your bread-basket, til your break’st, the morn !” John, we say, had just uttered these words, when his rider unclasped his legs from his neck and breast, laid himself on his back, drew up his limbs till the soles of his boots rested on the shoulders of the impatient animal he had lately bestrode, and saying, in a light tone, “There, then, old psalm-twanger !” shoved John many paces forward, among the litter of the fallen roof, and then springing to his feet, continued, “God save all here, this fine morning, and peace between us ! and no offence, I hope, good people,

in an intrusion that, assuredly, has been as much against my will as it can be against yours."

"And, before the Lord, you shall be taught how much against our will it *is*," threatened John Sharpe, scrambling towards the speaker, as he prepared to draw his sword ; "and how much against my will you have dared to kick me with the heels of your boots, in base requital for your first descent on my head, and my patient enduring of the same."

"Off with you, old limb of old Noll!" cried the stranger, also unsheathing his brilliant blade, "or I will send you to ask him how he likes his warm corner—you know where."

The young man's attendants now rushed down the sides of the almost fully-exposed hollow, crying out, in Irish, that none should touch their master ; Rory, enlisted as their ally by the sound of their language, joined them ; the priest clasped Patrick O'Burke in his arms, and held him apart from the scene ; and Captain Pendergast, still doomed to be the only peacemaker, stepped between John Sharpe and new foes.

Wrenching the old sword from his man's hand, he threatened to visit him with its flat between the shoulders, if he did not fall aside, and leave unnoticed what could only have been an accident.

"Thanks, sir," resumed the young gentleman politely, and with a dash of courtier-like breeding, moving his fine-plumed hat, which he had just picked up from among the boughs and leaves ; "and you have rightly understood the matter ; so that to you I am assured I need not repeat that my coming in here was unintended ; although I am no way unwilling to express my sorrow for the damage I have done, and the fright I must have occasioned."

"We are content to set off your own fright against ours, sir," answered Pendergast ; "seeing that, in all conscience, yours ought to be the greater ; as for the damage, we can afford it passing well so long as there grow trees in the wood, and as a stag can be seen within shot in the park, hard-by."

"If that be all, then," resumed the intruder, "I shall begin to think that I merit commiseration and fair apologies for having had a pit set for my life, more than any of ye, sir, merit my excuses that I could not keep my feet from the snare :" this was said in a laughing tone ; "but, faith!" he continued, in a graver mood, "I feared some one might chance to have been hurt."

"None of us say as much," resumed Pendergast, looking round ; "at least I answer for myself and for my servant."

"Oh, *he* has already answered on his own account," said the stranger. John Sharpe, suddenly changing into his mood of bitter irony assented with his usual tame chuckle. "Come forward, Patrick O'Burke, and satisfy us concerning yourself and your tutor," continued Captain Pendergast.

"Patrick O'Burke? is *he* here?" demanded the young man.

"I am Patrick O'Burke," said the boy, at last disengaging himself from his anxious warden, and advancing.

"Then I embrace you, Patrick—the son of your father's friend embraces you; and though both our fathers be taken from us, that is no reason why we should not prove friends to each other; I am Philip Walsh, Baron of Crana."

"My father has often spoken of yours, indeed, Baron of Crana," said the boy, accepting and returning in a manly style the French accolade which was proffered to him.

"Ay, and mine of yours, Patrick," answered the young nobleman; "and knowing this as well as in obedience to the last wishes of the last Baron of Crana, here I came to—but, saints of Heaven! we must choose another audience-room, for this grows too hot to hold us."

Although the timber and leaves of the roof had hidden Rory's fire for a time, they had not extinguished, but rather added fresh fuel to it; in fact, the flame had now spread among the branches and boughs which the young Baron of Crana had urged down upon the red turf used by the old man for his cooking, and came bursting out, through thick smoke, with a strength that promised to extend its ravages over all the inflammable materials in the pit, as well as upon the portion of the frail roof which still wavered overhead.

All readily assented to the young Baron's suggestion of removing to a more convenient place for conversation; and it became a real scramble up the obstructed sides of the pit to the open plat which spread around from its edges, each individual of the party anxious to save himself. Arrived in the upper daylight, Rory caused a general digression from previous topics, by having recurrence to his hand-clapping system of alarm, and mourning over the destruction of the viands destined for breakfast. To supply the loss, Patrick O'Burke volunteered to hasten to the park, and shoot a buck with his cross-bow; his new friend the Baron of Crana proposed, seemingly much amused, to try his pistols upon some wood-birds; Pendergast commanded John Sharpe to follow Rory, with his carabine, to a rabbit-warren, and John acquiesced with a better grace than his master had expected, for he was hungry; and thus, in a

few moments, the group were scattered in different directions, all except Father James and his military patron ; and they, setting themselves down at opposite sides of the pile of stones, awaited in silence the return of the purveying party, each full of his own thoughts.

CHAPTER VI.

AFTER a silence of some length, Pendergast suddenly arose, stood before the priest, and asked him if the young O'Burke had hopes of succeeding to any portion of the property of his father. The clergyman, startled out of a deep and wayward reverie, looked up at his companion with all his former expression of fright and vagueness in his eyes, and made no answer. The question was repeated abruptly, and somewhat impatiently ; at the same time shots sounded near, from the Baron of Crana's pistols and John Sharpe's carabine, and obviously losing consciousness of his real situation, and recollection of the recent events which had produced it, the priest shrank closer to the heap of stones, uttering feeble cries for mercy, or at the least, "for time—time ! only a little time !"

Here Captain Pendergast again had to exert his ingenuity to lead back the poor man's mind from its wanderings ; and, curbing his impatience with his pity, he was soon successful, or partially so. Once more the clergyman comprehended that, in the individual before him, he and his darling pupil, and old Rory, were called upon to recognise a protector : and when Pendergast a third time proposed his question—" His father's estate !" said the priest ; " No, no ; not a blade of glass of it is Patrick's—not a leaf of a tree."

" But the blades of grass and the trees remain, after all," urged the catechist.

" Remain not to him," persisted Father James. Pendergast alluded to the Treaty of Limerick. " We know, we know ; —enjoyment of their estates to all comprehended in the treaty ; —not to him ; not to my dear pupil."

" Sir Redmond O'Burke's estate has been confiscated, then, under an outlawry, before his death ?"

" Every sod, every bush, every stone ! Ay, ay, outlawry,

outlawry ! God help us ! God pity us ! " his terrors again began to master him.

" At this rate I have miscalculated indeed," said the Captain, only speaking to himself, as he remembered how anxiously he had before interpreted the treaty of Limerick in Patrick O'Burke's favour.

" What, what ? " resumed the priest : " so disappointed, Sir Captain ? The good Tipperary acres would indemnify for our housing, and feeding, and hiding : but now that you can reckon on none—"

Pendergast interrupted him sternly to set him right ; and it was remarkable that his decided manner had the effect of steady-ing instead of scaring the reasoning faculties of his wayward friend. Perhaps the manner and language of truth and sincerity at once convinced the skeptic, at the same time that Pendergast's frowning brow, fixed eye, and authoritative voice might have had an effect usual in most cases of mental aberration.

" Wonderful to hear," resumed Father James—" wonderful to hear, and a miracle to believe ; one of our taskers, and one of our masters, and one of our persecutors, takes us into his house, and keeps us, and hides us—And our chapel ?—will you build us a chapel, too ? or give us leave for one under the roof that is to shelter us ? "

Captain Pendergast replied that, renouncing in his heart as he did, many of the observances of Popery, he could scarce think himself conscientiously free to permit, under his very roof, the performance of its ceremonies. Patrick O'Burke and his tutor might, nevertheless, find themselves uninterrupted in their religious duties at Pendergast-hall ; Rory would have a little lodge in the grounds, close at hand, and they could visit him at their pleasure.

The priest seemed to understand this answer, and to be contented with it, and was growing calmer, when to give fresh excitement to his vibrating mind, the flames burst furiously out of the pit, near them, and the remnant of the deceitful roof fell in. He was, indeed, fast relapsing into mental confusion, when Patrick O'Burke appeared, leading back his purveying party, all now well laden with a supply for breakfast. But when his pupil sat by his side, and exchanged a few words with him, he seemed disposed to be happier than his friends had seen him since his visit to the den the previous night. Rony Laherty, John Sharpe, and—laughing at his task, and boasting of his

success among the wood-pigeons—the young baron of Crana, began to prepare the morning repast, and the priest looked on, much pleased. They brought brands from the edge of the burning pit to make a fire for cooking their meat, and he rubbed his hands gleeishly, and laughed in a low key, often changing his eyes from their proceedings to Patrick's face.

Presently arose Rory Laherty's usual wailings at the recollection that his wine-cellar was choked up by the burning mass of branches, reeds, and rushes. The young Baron seriously sympathized with him ; but Pendergast suggested that a draught more healthy than wine, and more seemly for a morning meal, could be obtained near at hand, out of the clear bubbling spring.

"Fetch it, Rory," said Patrick, "if indeed you can find a vessel to raise the water : but your cup is gone at last, I reckon."

"Nien, nien, nien!" answered Rory, pulling the esteemed vessel out of his great pocket, and running to the spring.

The viands were ready for eating, and Pendergast, Patrick, Philip of Crana, and the Priest sat down on the grass to partake of them ; Rory, John Sharpe, and the Baron's attendants removing to some distance. The conversation of the principal party soon became interesting. Pendergast inquired if the late Baron of Crana had been "out, on the late occasions?"

"Until the Boyne affair, sir," answered the young nobleman ; "and then there happened that to him which allows me this day to bear his title."

"You had an elder brother, Baron?" said Patrick.

"Yes, O'Burke ; poor Roger ! Hillsboro' was no success for him, though a boasted one for his cause. You will believe me, that I sorrow for Roger's death, as a brother for a brother whom he well loved ; and yet his being alive now would little serve either of us except the regard of loving one another still in misfortune."

Captain Pendergast said he did not understand.

"I speak no riddles, notwithstanding, sir : had my brother Roger lived a day, an hour, a second after my father, and had the fact been known to our new keepers, he and I, and, worst of all, our only merry little sister, now sheltering in France, perhaps in Spain, were at present no more than penniless, nameless beggars on the face of the earth."—

"Like me," said Patrick O'Burke.

"—For," continued the Baron, "poor Roger, for being one of the aptest foes of William and Mary from the very beginning, was outlawed in Meath, two years ago."

"Like my father," interrupted Patrick.

"Ay, O'Burke;" young Philip, tears in his eyes, and smiles on his lips, stretched his hand to the disinherited boy, and they exchanged in silence a gripping pressure.

"So that, had your father's estate, Baron," said Pendergast, "been possessed, for any the shortest time, by your outlawed brother—"

"That is," interrupted the Baron, "as I have declared before, had Roger but lived an hour after my father, without ever really possessing his estate, and no matter how remote from the country in which it lies, he must have been regarded as its owner; and it would have passed away from him, from me, from Dorcas our sister, from us and ours, for ever."

"Well; and now that a chance, which we know not whether to call lucky or ill, preserves it to you, Baron of Crana, we will hope that you feel contented with the late arrangements, by virtue of which that chance turns up in your favour," resumed Pendergast.

"Contented? ay, by St. Louis and St. Patrick! The double crown need not reckon on a better Irish subject than Philip Walsh. I have been in France, Mr. Pendergast, and there learned to enjoy life; to live while I do live, and be thankful to those who leave me the means so to do. Besides, St. Germains is in France, and I spent a day there too, and had my opportunities for reading the character of the man on whose account we have all been putting ourselves to some trouble, and running some chance of damage to the fair acres God bestowed on us, if not of peril to our precious persons also. And so, sir, a merry life of peace for me, in the hunt, on the bowling-green, and at the merry board (with something at my right hand stronger than Rory's morning draught), instead of hard knocks and short commons in the service of old Shamus."

"Heartily spoken, Baron of Crana; and in truth there is little to lament over in the loss of your late master," observed Pendergast.

"Except the losses he has caused us. But no matter; *vive la gaité!*—that is, in English, or in Irish, rather, long life to merry fellows! ay, and *vive* little Willy too! He's no bad thing to me, and if I run the hazard of making him a worse one to me, say I shall deserve the consequences. Experience, come at what age it will, makes us wise—or selfish, if you like, sir,—wise still, I say, and young as I am, I have sufficiently known the reverses of fortune to like a good prospect at the last; ay, and though I profess my disrelish of fighting, to day, have

sought enough into the bargain, to give me a title to rest at peace during the next ten years, and the next twenty, thirty, after that, if I can help it. So Mr. Pendergast—Captain Pendergast I should say—I drink to your good health, and to the most excellent welfare of their anointed Majesties King William and — but I crave your pardon ; ever I forget that we are put off with Adam's ale this cold morning.”

“ And your pleasant discourse makes me forget that I, and some others of this company, should be in our saddles an hour ago,” said Pendergast, rising.

“ That brings me to speak of my true business here,” resumed the baron. “ While away from you, sir, to help in providing our breakfast, Patrick O’Burke gave me to understand why we meet each other on the lands that are no longer his ; therefore I do not hesitate to inform you that I, as well as you, rode hither from Limerick, to claim the acquaintance and friendship of the last O’Burke, and invite him to visit me at my castle, whither I am directly bound : and notwithstanding his story of your first right to do him a kindness, and I still have hopes that, in recollection of the love long interchanged between his father and mine, to say nothing of our agreement in certain important matters touching which you and Patrick can never hope to agree, you will waive your honourable intentions towards him, in my favour, and allow me to take the boy home to the old castle of Crana.”

“ Let Patrick O’Burke speak first,” said Pendergast.

“ I have spoken, sir,” replied Patrick, “ when the Baron of Crana addressed me so kindly, and we watching a buck, at the wood’s edge, an hour ago.”

“ For or against me, Patrick ??”

“ For obeying the last breath of my father, and following to the world’s end his *last friend*, sir.”

“ Thanks, my boy ; though, be assured, had your opinion gone differently, it was not my purpose to allow it to part us. Mine is a trust which must not be broken. Meanwhile, I am glad, for your sake, that heaven raises you up another anxious friend in this plain-spoken and generous young nobleman ; and, Patrick, entreat him to ride with us a little way north, before he revisits his own castle, and judge how he shall like the son of his father’s friend at Pendergast-hall ; after which entreaty, we must mount our horses, and make the most of this sun-shiny day.”

The Baron of Crana could not be persuaded, however, to turn aside from his road, at the present. He had, he said, to

make order out of confusion, in his long-uninhabited house ; and then he would be bound to visit his sister in Spain, where he believed she was now protected. But, yielding to Pendergast's unostentatious invitations, he consented to visit his young friend, at no distant time, under the captain's roof ; and upon this understanding, all prepared for their separate journeys.

It now became a question how Patrick and the priest should be mounted : as to Rory, he regarded the want of a horse as the least possible inconvenience, cheerfully stipulating to trot on at the side of his young master. But two horses were indispensable for the pupil and tutor ; and Philip of Crana insisted that those belonging to his attendants should be accepted by Patrick and the priest, while the men could follow him afoot to the nearest place where they might expect to be remounted.

"And until we can procure a horse for Rory Laherty, on our road home," said Pendergast, "you, John, will now and then give him a lift behind your saddle."

"George Walker, which is the name of my horse, given unto him in honour of the hero of Derry, will not carry double for king or deevil," answered John Sharpe. "I tried him once, yon, after the Aughram business, with a loyal mon, not to talk of a Papish, and his hinder heels flew up in the air, as if it was the very Pope of Rome he felt near his crupper."

"Then you and Rory must ride and tie, John," resumed his master ; and this was said in a voice and with a look from which John understood no appeal.

"Now, Rory, go for Brann," said Patrick O'Burke, the tears springing to his eyes, as the preparations for travelling proceeded : and Rory, darting into the wood, disappeared.

"And who is Brann, Patrick ?" asked Pendergast. The boy answered that Brann was the name of a dog—a young whelp, indeed, to which he was much attached. His father, he said, had taken great pains to preserve the breed of the old wolf-hound or stag-hound, of Ireland, and many of them had been about their house until the coming of King William's soldiers, when in consequence of their inveterate, and indeed, dangerous hostility to the intruders, they had all been shot—all except the whelp, Brann, who followed Patrick to the woods. "So that he is the last of his race, like his master," added the boy ; "and while Rory and I hid ourselves in the hole where you passed the night, sir, we thought it well to remove Brann to a good distance, and tie him up there, lest his yelpings, if by our side, might guide enemies to our den ; but

he has been well fed, and often visited during the day, and had a soft bed to lie on, and a little shed to cover him."

While Patrick spoke, his friend Brann came bounding out of the wood, followed by Rory, and jumped upon his young master with such headlong joy, that he threw him down. Captain Pendergast viewed with surprise the stature of the animal whom Patrick had described as not full grown, observing, that if Brann had yet to grow much more, he would end in being a canine giant. Patrick assured his protector that he had not attained half his size. Some moments afterward, the whole party were making way through the wood to the broad avenue, such of them as had horses leading the animals along. They gained the avenue, and all except Rory and the Baron's attendants mounted to their saddles. The cavalcade moved towards the valley by which Pendergast had approached the ruined house the night before ; and now, Rory Laherty's wild cries and lamentations rang far and wide among the hills and woods. Pendergast stole a glance at Patrick. His lips were firmly closed, and he seemed to swallow the tears which only glistened in his eye. He gazed on straight before him, and would not look either to the right or to the left, nor yet turned round to catch for the last time a glimpse of his ruined home. Rory's outcries grew louder, and he bade him hold his peace.

The travellers emerged from the valley upon the wretched road which ran across its entrance. A few miles onward, they came to the spot at which the Baron of Crana was to turn off on his way to his own castle. The adieu between him and young O'Burke was warm and hearty on his part ; Patrick felt it more deeply, though he spoke little. " You know which way to ride, if you want a friend, O'Burke," said the young Baron, pointing to the road he was about to take, and an instant afterward he spurred his horse over it, followed by his dismounted servants.

" And now for Pendergast-Hall, Patrick," said Pendergast ; and the other travellers pushed forward in the opposite direction, Rory and Brann rivaling each other in the use of their own legs.

John Sharpe had gradually recovered from the ill-humour raised in him by his master's injunctions that he should ride-and-tie with Rory Laherty, until a horse could be procured for the old gamekeeper. The first incident which diverted him was the priest's preparations for mounting his steed. When John saw the nervous poor man tucking up his long, torn

robe, at either side, and then awkwardly, and after several failures, climbing to his saddle, he looked on with a sneering, lugubrious smile of mingled astonishment, mirth, and contempt, which now and then was farther modified by some misgivings as to the decency of the exhibition, and a confused impression that all he beheld was miserable superstition, profaneness, and a novel and curious illustration of the nastiness of the Beast of Rome. Rory's outcries and extravagance then added to his supercilious mirth ; and as all at last moved forward, after parting from the young popish nobleman, whose title, star, manners, and every thing connected with him seemed utter farce in the trooper's eyes, John Sharpe, glancing from the meagre, half-bent figure of the priest, to the grotesque one of Rory Laherty, as he trotted, leading Brann at his stirrup, and then to the bare-headed, poorly-attired boy who rode beside his master, said between his teeth and his pipe, in an exceeding chuckle, " Well ; get us, now, but a bear and an ape, and we are fit to make our round of all the fairs, till Midsummer ; troth, jest ! "

CHAPTER VII.

PENDERGAST halted his party a few days at Clonmel, and here some provocations to John Sharpe's irony were removed. Patrick O'Burke put off his old clothes for a suit more fitted to his condition and change of fortune ; Father James was prevailed upon to substitute for his ragged serge robe, and the thread-bare appendages under it, a more ordinary dress of black ; Rory Laherty became also improved in his outward man, and moreover was elevated on horseback.

Again the travellers moved rapidly forward, and reached Dublin. In this city Captain Pendergast had some friends, and he hastened to make known among them his arrival from the south, glad of an opportunity of conversing with intelligent persons upon the public topics of the day, an indulgence so long denied to him. He was anxious to find confirmed his own sanguine hopes that the late termination of the civil war was acceptable among all parties, and likely, from national unanimity, to ensure the future peace and good of Ireland. Pendergast also felt solicitous to ascertain whether or not the

temper of the times boded good or ill-luck to his adopted son, or promised well for Patrick's comfort and happiness at Pendergast-Hall.

It was upon a Sunday morning that, leaving the boy, Father James, and old Rory, to find out some place of devotion for themselves, he went out, attended by John Sharpe, proposing first to call at a friend's house, and then repair to church. His friend was at home, at breakfast, surrounded by many other gentlemen, and the visiter soon heard discussed the topics which so much interested him—but not in the way he had anticipated. To his surprise and regret, every voice was lifted up against the Treaty of Limerick, as a measure of undeserved leniency and favour to King James's adherents, and of ungrateful injustice to King William's. The speaker represented the expectation of the Protestants of Ireland to have extended to the total suppression of Popery, the total confiscation of the estates and goods of every man who had drawn a sword for James, and the conferring of such property upon those who had distinguished themselves as zealous supporters of William and Mary. And the object at which these sentiments seemed to aim, and the great hope of the malecontents, was, that the parliaments of England and of Ireland would not ratify the Treaty of Limerick, but rather yield to their remonstrances against it.

Captain Pendergast submitted, in vain, the injustice of such an expectation. He reminded his friends that the treaty was fairly the result of the formidable attitude of James's Irish partisans, and of Ginkle's perception and admission of what they had done, and what they might do. He objected to having his Roman Catholic countrymen considered as rebels for their support of a monarch to whom they had sworn allegiance, and who had never been deposed by the vote of an Irish Parliament. He exclaimed against the inconsequential reasoning which would now oppress Catholics more than they had been oppressed at the end of the reign of Charles II., merely because they were Catholics, particularly by breaking through a solemn treaty. And most of all, he expatiated upon the hope which that treaty, if acted upon, held out, to all men of just minds and cool temperaments, of the national prosperity of Ireland, promoted, in union, by her children of every creed, equally free, or very nearly so, to lend her the assistance of their talents and energies. In vain, we say, did Pendergast urge these arguments. Thirst of monopoly, sectarian rancour, and colonial jealousy, united to make his hearers deaf at

heart to his appeal ; and in much sorrow, and some anger, he bade his friends good morning, and again joined by Sharpe, bent his way to the church, where, as he had been informed, the Archbishop of Meath was expected to preach, before high authorities of the land, upon the self-same subject which he had just been discussing.

John Sharpe walked behind his master with an elated step, a high head, and every now and then a heart-comforting chuckle. He had heard quite as much in the kitchen of the house they had visited, as his captain had heard in the parlour, and his soul was glad within him accordingly. "It won't do," Pendergast heard him say—"it won't do, this time : no petticoat priests cocked up a-horseback ; with their knees going til scratch their ears ;—ugh, ugh ; no Baron-me-that, and Sir Pat-me-this, let go to canter it, and tatter it, and hell-rake it about the country—ugh, ugh."

Much inclined to turn round upon his man, and yet forbearing to notice him, Pendergast gained Christ Church. Doctor Dopping, Archbishop of Meath, mounted the pulpit, and in the face of the representatives of power in Ireland, as well as to a numerous congregation, propounded the same doctrines, touching the politics of the day, which Pendergast had heard broached in his friend's house, with this difference only, that from the mouth of the zealous dignitary they came mended in syllogistical array, in energy, and in the aids of language. The moderate-minded, though perfectly loyal and Protestant hearer, felt his grief and indignation rise stronger within him ; and he at last moved to leave the church, when, in allusion to Pendergast's favourite treaty, Dr. Dopping distinctly laid down the proposition that faith was not to be kept with Papists.

Captain Pendergast looked to the form, outside the pews, upon which John Sharpe sat, in order to give his man a signal to arise and accompany him homeward. With his knees wide apart, his bony hands grasping them, his body bent forward, and a smile of the kindest approbation, John's eyes were fixed on the preacher. In vain his master strove to catch his glance ; it was immovable. His lips, however, often moved, either unconsciously repeating words that his soul drank in like a cordial, or blessing the author of them ; and sometimes they seemed to water, either in extreme delight, or perhaps as an unbidden thought of his pipe crossed his mind—his pipe, which, out of deference to the sacred roof, he had reluctantly forced from between his teeth at the church-door, and folded up in a linen rag, and put in his pocket.

After watching him a long while, Pendergast at length caught John's eye, and gave him a signal. But John, quickly reverting his regards to the Archbishop of Meath, pretended not to have noticed the occurrence, and thenceforward his master stood little chance of being honoured with a look from him. Pendergast was leaving the church alone, determined to take vengeance on his refractory servant the earliest opportunity, when the sermon ended, and, ere he could bustle through the crowd, John Sharpe joined him, his pipe in his hand, ready to be resumed the moment they should cross the threshold.

"How durst you, sirrah, disregard the sign I made you to stand up, and leave the church?" demanded Pendergast.

"The sign your honour made til me?" repeated John, as he stopped to light his touch-paper, very deliberately: "as I am a Christian man, I saw your worship make no sign til me, the morn; or if your honour did make one, and that my eyes were turned so as to see it, doubtless they were blinded from seeing any thing but that blessed man, as my ears were deaf to any sounds but the blessed words of his mouth."

"I fear you lie, John, very particularly; but home, sir, now that your nose-funnel is a-smoking; this is not the place to speak with you."

"A heavenly man!" continued John, as he strode happily after Captain Pendergast—"a light, and a burning star; troth jest! a jewel of a man;—it won't—no; it won't do with them, this time; ugh;—troth, no."

Forgetting, in his bustle to leave Dublin, his momentary dudgeon against his follower, Captain Pendergast gave orders for travelling northward that very day, and, after an early dinner, he, and all those depending upon his motives, bade adieu to the capital. His mind was saddened so much, he spoke less than usual to his young protégée. "If," he argued—"if such be the current opinions and feelings in Dublin, upon this treaty, what must I expect to find them a hundred miles farther north?"

With little adventure, our party gained Pendergast Hall, a plain but respectable square house, with wings and out-offices, well-sheltered by trees, and surrounded by fertile fields, gardens, and plantations: and during his journey from Dublin to his own home, and after his arrival there, Pendergast experienced no disappointment of his anticipations of the fervour of party hostility against the measure he would fain get all to be content with, but which few indeed considered as he did.

In these pages, as well as in others which the writers have

submitted to their readers, an endeavour has been made to guard against prejudices of country and creed, while alluding to historical events necessarily bearing upon the task in hand. Upon former occasions, whenever the words of a neutral, or even an adverse historian could be found to convey, briefly, the information required, he has spoken to the reader—and oftener, perhaps, than some readers gave him or his transcribers credit for. In the same view, some chapters back, an abstract of the Treaty of Limerick has been supplied from a well-known English historian ; and now, lest we should be suspected of exaggerating the opposition to that treaty immediately after its occurrence, the same authority is here quoted, almost in continuation of the former extract :—

“ The Protestant subjects of Ireland were extremely disgusted at these concessions, *made in favour of vanquished rebels*, who had exercised such acts of cruelty and rapine. They complained, that they themselves, who had suffered for their loyalty to King William, were neglected, and obliged to sit down with their losses ; while their enemies, who had shed so much blood in opposing his government, were indemnified by the articles of the capitulation, and were favoured with particular indulgences. *They were dismissed with the honours of war* : they were transported, at the Government’s expense, to fight against the English in foreign countries : an honourable provision was made for the Rapparees, who were professed banditti : *the Roman Catholic interest in Ireland obtained the sanction of regal authority* ; attainders were overlooked, forfeitures annulled, pardons extended, and the laws set aside, in order to obtain a pacification.”

Smollet adds, as a kind of answer on his own account to these angry objections, that “ Ginkle had received orders to put an end to the war, at any rate.”

And such were the comments upon his esteemed treaty which now assailed Captain Pendergast from every quarter, and, he foresaw, would succeed in breaking through it, and so redeliver the land to sectarian tyranny and national degradation. Such, in fact, were the comments which *did* break through it, and by which, in consequence, Ireland was made a country without a people, a province of the rule of griping colonists over millions of wretched, wretched slaves. But it is best said—and perhaps it should only have been said—such were the comments which, by leading to a breach of Ireland’s “charter of civil and religious rights,” and, at the same time, sharpening the already keen scent of monopoly, influenced

and prescribed the fortunes of the greater number of the individuals yet introduced to the reader, and of others who are still to be made known to him.

A few days after his arrival at home, Captain Pendergast had arranged his establishment in all its different departments. Patrick O'Burke had his chamber and his study ; so had Father James ; and suitable books were supplied to both. Foreseeing future discussions and difficulties, Pendergast caused Patrick to prevail on the priest to allow himself to be called Mr. James, simply, without any title indicating his clerical character ; and with much difficulty the boy accomplished his allotted task, so vibrating and unsettled, so moody and wayward was still the mind of his poor tutor. John Sharpe, at peril of all he held dearest in the world, namely, his place and his master's friendship, was charged to hold his tongue regarding the incognito clergyman ; and Rory also received many necessary lectures upon acting a prudent part. It should not be forgotten that the new land-steward took formal possession of his comfortable house, some distance from the principal mansion ; nor that Rory Laherty established himself in the wood-hut, where he was to reign supreme over partridges, woodcocks, snipes, hares, and rabbits. And the Sunday following his day of possession, Rory was on the look-out for Father James and Patrick O'Burke, to enter his dwelling by a private approach, and the three isolated Papists enjoyed their religious observance together.

CHAPTER VIII.

PATRICK O'BURKE gradually improved in letters, under the secret instructions of Father James, and in manly sports and exercises, under the more open tuition of Rory Laherty, and, strange as it may seem, of John Sharpe : but of this latter fact more shall hereafter be said. It is first to be noticed, that neither his mental occupation in the house, nor his recreations out of doors, nor even the parental kindness of Pendergast, could for sometime dissipate the grave and almost stern reserve of manner which the boy brought to the abode of his protector, and which, in one so young, was sometimes disagreeable, sometimes touching, to observe. Pendergast watched

him closely, and at last believing he had discerned the cause of this unnatural gloom of mind, partially succeeded in removing it. He took an opportunity of obtaining from Patrick an admission, to the effect that he regarded himself as a poor and unentitled dependent upon the bounty of a stranger ; and that not all the affection with which he was treated, nor even the last wishes of his father, could reconcile his spirit to a lot so humiliating.

"But, Patrick, this is an error," said Pendergast ; for, though your father's estates be, for the present, and, according to words of law, estreated for ever from you, still I do not despair of seeing them restored, in part, at least, to your father's son :—wait but a few years till the times settle down into more assured quietness, and then judge of your chance."

Patrick's eyes brightened at this unfounded promise, which, indeed, Pendergast made only for the attainment of the amiable object he had in view : and after an instant's more serious reflection, said—" 'Tis a pleasing hope, sir ; yet, what prospect have we of more settled times, when, day after day, they grow worse in party hatred ? When, instead of permitting the disinherited Catholic to recover the lands of his fathers, most men of your persuasion try all means to discover a bad title, as your laws call it, in the holdings of such Catholics as have hitherto escaped confiscation ?"

Pendergast fully felt the truth and force of the boy's reasoning ; but it was not his policy to admit that he did : on the contrary, he again found a ready answer for Patrick's doubts, who, finally, had no more to say than—"I will keep strict and honourable account, then, Mr. Pendergast, of my obligations to you, until the good day you speak of comes : and when his friend, still humouring the prejudices he wished to soothe down, for Patrick's own sake, seemingly assented to this arrangement, they parted upon a better understanding with each other than had previously been established between them, and from that day forward Patrick's brow rose, and he felt, and looked happy.

This change in his disposition, producing a corresponding change in his manner and actions, gained him friends on all hands. And now commenced John Sharpe's interest in Patrick. Hitherto, the old soldier had hated, with his habitual strength, the coldness (which to him was haughtiness) of the young O'Burke ; John called it "ould, ill-flavoured, grandee-Papish pride," and turned up his nose, or laughed shortly and bitterly at it, upon all occasions. But when Patrick became

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ltered person ; when he greeted John with smiles, as they in the fields ; when with a careless good-humour, he gave laugh for laugh, and *would* be a friend of his, cost what it ht ; when he oftener took a gun in his hand, and killed e game than he used to do, and, above all, took braver s, over stream or hedge, upon his hunting-pole, as he sed the hare : when all this came repeatedly under the -steward's observation a great revolution ensued in his feel-towards his master's adopted son. At first, indeed, the re-tion made little in Patrick's favour, for John's loathing turned into indignation at what he chose to regard as auty, as, in fact, a wanton presuming in one situated like "the rebel's spawn." But, by degrees, a recurrence of similar occasions to his anger, instead of confirming his dislike and ness, won his heart, just as some ladies' hearts are said to von ; and, to his own astonishment, often muttered to him-between the black shank of his short pipe and his teeth, black as it, he at last found himself disposed to manifest a f friendship for his young tormentor.

ome accidents served to fix his liking for ever : and of these, shall be recounted which could have produced good-will ie bosom of no other man than John Sharpe ; and another, ch proved that the heart in that bosom was made of better than its owner would condescend to admit, or perhaps ected it of.

His growing inclination towards Patrick began to show itself his meeting him and the old gamekeeper upon their sport-excursions, and at first railing against both for some attri-ed lack of skill in the management of their weapons, or in r pursuit of game, and then supplying fractious instructions "a more christian and ceevilized method in field sports." did not spare old Rory rebukes, severe and satirical, yet half posed of supercilious witticism, explained by his laconic shs, upon the scandal of training up his young charge in a inner so unworthy ; and finally, he would venture to take the or the salmon-spear out of Rory's hands, for the purpose howing him a wild duck or a fish might be killed, accord-to the best rules.

ohn was not always as successful as he promised to be ; neither Rory nor Patrick noticed his failures so as to vex . In fact, the shrewd, though almost wild old man, saw ; for the interest of his beloved foster-son, as well as of self (or else for quietness' sake), it behooved him to live on d-terms with the land-steward, and he would not therefore

touch his vanity in any sensitive point : and Patrick too much relished John's peculiarities to deprive himself, by an open rupture, of opportunities for waggish experiments upon them, many of which he successfully attempted, with a grave face, on his own part, with the most imperturbable affectation of unconsciousness on Rory's part, and with scarce a suspicion, at the time, on John's part, of the laugh enjoyed at his expense.

One winter's day they met, as usual upon the verge of an extensive bog, to which wild-geese made an occasional visit. As Sharpe came up with the sportsmen, Patrick and Rory had just fired together at one of these birds, and missed it. John's contemptuous disapprobation was soon expressed, and calling upon them to mark the flight, and the second descent of the startled goose, he vauntingly proposed to follow it himself, and show them how to make sure of it ;—nay, he engaged to hit the bird with a single ball, at any distance within a hundred and fifty yards. All eyes accordingly tracked the goose round the bog, and the place where it at length pitched. John then handed his piece, his old musket—he would use no other—to Patrick, in order that the boy's own hands might draw the charge of shot, and substitute a ball. The goose rose again, during these operations, and before Patrick had rammed the ball home, John hastened off to watch the proceedings of his marked victim, giving orders that his musket should be borne after him. So soon as he turned his back, Patrick added a double charge of powder, and along with the ball, a handful of large shot, reckoning to put the steward in for an unexpected rebound of the heavy piece, but at the same time assured that its solid and approved construction would not expose him to material danger from the unusual explosion. This done, he and Rory followed, according to orders.

They found Sharpe on his knees behind a low fence, at another point of the edge of the bog. His neck was stretched out, his eyes fixed, and, as he heard them approach, he made signs with his hands behind his back, that they should tread cautiously, and give him the musket without delay : "She's a sunning her ain sel, on yon turf," he whispered, while Patrick, creeping up to him, handed the deadly weapon ; "not thinking a-bit, who's looking at her ; troth, jest, no ; hu, ugh ! " and as he spoke, John first tapped the red tobacco in his pipe, to give it new life, and then slowly raised the piece to his left shoulder — for he was what is called left-handed, and, even in the battle field, had always presented his favourite musket in the same fashion ;—"well ; now for til tell her I'm here," he continued,

taking malignant aim. Patrick had stepped back, out of all possible danger ; Rory had not advanced within its scope : John pulled the trigger ; a report, as if from a field-piece, mingled with an imperfected scream from the goose, and a short bellow from the marksman, followed : at the same time the one was seen to spring high in air, and then fall dead, almost annihilated indeed, and the other to tumble backward, and roll into a slough. Neither Rory nor Patrick added a laugh to the mixture of jarring and horrid sounds, for the old man completely controlled much heartfelt mirth, and the author of the mischief continued to subdue his own joyous hysterics.

" 'Twas your master bid ye do that ?" were the first distinct words they heard Sharpe utter, as he emerged, scrambling, through the white cloud of smoke in which he was enveloped ; and they were not a little surprised to note that neither his speech nor tones expressed the great wrath they had prepared themselves to encounter ;—" 'Twas your master bid you do that, Sir Paddy O'Burke ?" he continued, limping towards them, his right hand tenderly rubbing his left shoulder.

" *My* master ?" questioned Patrick ; what mean you, John, by *my* master ?"

" Troth, jest ;—your master, lad," resumed Sharpe.

" Explain your words, I say, man :" Patrick's face reddened ; he feared some spiteful and coarse allusion to his dependent situation ;—" I am my own master, and neither have, nor will have another."

" Nevertheless, it was your master bid you do it til me," persisted John Sharpe, now confronting the boy close, and grinning in such a fashion into his face, that it was difficult to say whether he relished and forgave the joke, or was only nursing his anger into a high and vicious explosion.

" Who, I demand to know again ?"

" His ain sel, and na ither for him," pursued John.

" Would you insult me, old John Sharpe ? I tell you I own no master living !" and Patrick now spoke impatiently.

" Nien ; but the one All-masther, high up," added Rory, in a pious, peace-making tone, as he pointed upwards, and pulled his foster-son's skirts to exhort him to keep his temper.

" But it wasna *He*," said John, turning his grinning face upon Rory, who drew back ; " it wasna *He* ; na, troth ; it was your hopeful bairn's true master ; the t'other,—and weel ye ken who ;" here he pointed as emphatically downwards, twice or thrice, as Rory had pointed upwards ; " the good ould di'el, ye ken ; troth, jest," and John ended his tardy explanation, by

giving one of his unique laughs, to which, after assuring himself that it was really meant for good-humour, Patrick contributed a more joyous one, and even old Rory could not now command the excellent discipline of his rough and wild features. And from this hour John Sharpe openly professed himself the admirer of Patrick O'Burke. It will not be attempted to explain how; so it was, and no more can be said.

The other occurrence which confirmed his wayward liking, was more useful to Patrick, (only so far, however, as it gave a certain determination to the old soldier's patronage,) than the mere amusing adventure just recounted: and it happened a long time afterward, when Patrick O'Burke had completed his twenty-fifth year.

Rory Laherty, in his capacity as gamekeeper, had several times represented to Mr. Pendergast, that a person from the neighbouring city was in the habit of intruding on the grounds, attended by two dogs, one a well-trained spaniel, the other a fierce and very ugly bull-bitch, and killing and carrying off whatever game he wished. Pendergast gave orders that Rory should warn the marauder to stay away. Rory complied; but his injunctions were lightly treated; and when he remonstrated in a higher tone, the bold stranger spoke aside to his bull-bitch, who immediately grinned like a demon, thus indicating the nature of her office on the sporting field. In fact, it was plain to be seen that the citizen carried on his war against rabbits, and birds of all kinds, under her guardianship. Nor was this the only threat put forward by her master. He uttered, at the same time, vague hints of having Rory in his power, as one in high esteem with the laws of the land; nay, he added, that there were some people in the house itself, (meaning Mr. Pendergast's,) who might rue the day they vexed him.

Again Rory applied to Pendergast, and that gentleman became thoughtful and cautious when he had heard the old gamekeeper's whole story. "We shall see," he said—"we shall see who this great and dangerous man is, Rory."

A few hours afterward, Mr. Pendergast rode into the city, made the necessary inquiries, and from their result concluded that, indeed, the invader of his grounds was not a person whose anger ought to be lightly roused; nor, considering the nature of the times, and Pendergast's situation with respect to the ~~the~~ Roman Catholics under his protection, whose threats ought to be disregarded.

Those days, bull-baiting was a favourite and even elevated

amusement with our ancestors, although not fully enjoying the *éclat* which attached to it in times more remote. Still, it kept up, however, much of its ancient attraction for all ranks, and for both sexes, and its periodical occurrence was a kind of public fête. In most of the considerable towns of Ireland, the superintendence of the civilized sport was committed to the care of some bold, dashing young bachelor, of the trading class, called the "Mayor of Bull-ring;" (his predecessors had boasted a more sounding title—"Lord of Bull-ring;") and he had his sheriffs of bull-ring, and other attendants; and was permitted, or rather made responsible for the honour of defraying part of the expenses of the exhibition, while the guild of the town or city supplied the rest. Nay, his high office collaterally conferred upon him another trust, namely, that of "Guardian of Bachelors," as it was called; and upon the marriage of each of his wards, he invariably held a distinguished place at the thronged nuptial feast.

From this statement, it will be seen that the Mayor of Bull-ring could scarce be a very industrious individual, or one of regular or temperate habits, or in fact, of good character. Among the population of a considerable town, bachelors often changed their estate; bull-baits also were frequent; so that a due attention to the double responsibility of his office, left him little time for more useful perseverance in trade or manufacture. In truth, his whole time passed either in festivity, or in blustering preparations for the sport of which he was the master, or else in superintending its actual display; or if, now and then, he had a day's leisure, the habits of his mind naturally sent him to seek recreation in some way congenial to his usual pursuits; such as the enjoyment of the bowling-green, or of the shiebeen house; or, if he could afford it, (and sometimes whether he could or not,) of the sporting or the hunting field.

Now, the present Mayor of Bull-ring of the city near to Mr. Pendergast's mansion, was the person of whom Rory Laherty had so much to complain; and never had a bolder bachelor filled that ancient office. His earliest boyhood had given promise of his almost unrivalled claims to discharge its duties with spirit and effect. The only son of a wealthy glover and leather-breeches maker, he flung down, at his twelfth year, the scissors, thimble, and needle, and entered upon a most popular career, in the estimation, at least, of all "gay blades" of his own turn of mind. His fond parent, half admiring his mettle, while he openly took him to task, supplied him with money, "to keep the poor fool from starvation on the streets,

expressed it : in process of time, "the poor fool," not finding his father's liberality sufficient for all his own other purposes, made free with the till in the shop, and perhaps with the strong-box above-stairs, and became banished from the paternal roof. Still no decrease ensued in his round of pleasures, nay, in his means of supporting them ; and convivial souls, like himself, never suspecting him of "bad ways," only laughed heartily in approval of the genius which, by some process unknown to the vulgar, kept John Gernon's purse so well filled. True, upon many occasions previous to his unanimous election as Mayor of Bull-ring, he had disappeared from among them, and, each time, stayed weeks away, no one could surmise where, or on what business : but, although envious tongues cautiously hinted certain resolutions of the little mystery, John suffered nought in more generous and more popular opinion.

It may be surmised, that this reigning favourite of the dashing bachelors of his community boasted a form and features suited to the brave rank he held in the world, as well as to what is generally known to be one of the great requisites sought in such a public representative, elected by such constituents. This was not, however, the case. John Gernon's face was square, sallow, and almost beardless, though he had passed the age of manhood ; his eyes were unpleasing, his mouth was hard, and seldom tempered by a smile ; and as for his figure, it was low and square, and his legs were inclined to be bandy. He made up, however, in strength, for what he lacked in comeliness. John had boxed, through boyhood and manhood, every contemporary worthy of notice, and never found one who could resist the power of his shoulders and arms, or much disturb him on his well-jointed, ungraceful, bandy legs : and perhaps a chief cause for this might be found in the fact, that he had never met among them a heart and a mind so truly courageous, in an animal sense, as his own ; so impervious to a thought of yielding ; so tranquilly certain of success in any struggle for personal superiority.

And such, Mr. Pendergast ascertained, was the difficult person he had now to deal with, as an intruder upon his grounds. Other traits of John Gernon's character gave him still less satisfaction. In pretended alarm of the treasonable designs of Roman Catholics, but really for the purpose of supporting the new laws directed against them, it had become fashionable in all large towns to form, among the citizens, military companies, horse as well as foot, who, after receiving arms from the authorities, clothed themselves, and served with-

out pay, that is, mustered every Sunday for parade, and went through their evolutions as well as they knew how. Of these bands, in John Gernon's native city, one was emphatically called "The Bachelors' company," and he, of course, became its captain. Indeed, had not his other dignities, and his previously admitted excellence, made this last election a matter of course, his remarkable loyalty, and inherited dislike of "Popery, slavery, brass sixpences, and wooden shoes," would have almost ensured it. For, of the very loyal of those times, John proclaimed himself the veriest; and so minutely did he cause the administration of all his offices of power to verify the fact, that the only bachelor's feast he was ever known to decline attending, was that of a Catholic; and the only dog he ever turned out of the bull-ring, was also of Popish blood.

It was evident, therefore, to Pendergast's good sense, that of such a man he must not make an open enemy. He found, indeed, that however John's wild ways might sink him in the private estimation of the reflective and respectable, and necessarily, of those in civil authority in the city, his political zeal served to establish between him and them a good public understanding; that their ears were open to his counsel, touching matters of state-expediency, and their inflamed prejudices but too active to second any salutary hint he might afford. Of John Gernon, then, whose character and disposition would readily propose, in revenge for harsh treatment, summary persecution of the proscribed papists in his house, and whose political influence was of sufficient weight to insure the success of his measure, Pendergast determined to stand as free as possible. And in this wise view, after gaining all the information required, he rode back to his hitherto peaceful mansion.

It was his intent to warn Rory Laherty and Patrick O'Burke of the peril they were in, and to advise them to avoid all future contentions with Gernon and his ugly bull-bitch. But fate had so ordered it, that his good instructions partly came too late, and partly were doomed to be disregarded.

CHAPTER IX.

ALTHOUGH Father James, after his domestication in the house of his good patron, showed little of the wildness of mind which had characterized him at their first meeting ; although he proved himself fully competent to the task of perfecting Patrick's education, and to the still more difficult one of concealing his own calling ; it was evident, notwithstanding, that his intellects had not recovered, and scarcely ever could be expected to recover, the great shock they had received during the visit of King William's soldiers to Sir Redmond O'Burke's mansion.

This fixed though modified imbecility of the concealed priest was observable in different ways. He never left his room but at mealtimes, or, now and then, when he hurried out of the house, by a back-door, to meet Patrick in Rory Laherty's hut, for religious purposes, or to bury himself in the depths of some remarkable seclusion, that he might there read, out of his breviary, the allotted offices for the day : and, upon these occasions, he would sometimes steal on tiptoe, sometimes run through the house, as if fearing an enemy at every step, and even enter the eating-room with a start, a shrinking back, and a glowing quickness of look, which no previous experience of the friendly faces to be met there could correct or instruct.

Other proofs of his unsettled state of mind were more striking ; sometimes, indeed, grotesque. Having sat down to his meal, he would eat as rapidly and as ravenously as when chance used to throw in his way a scrap of primitive food, during his lonely adventures among the hills, his eyes glancing suspiciously to either side at every mouthful. If wine was left too long near his hand, he would drink it till he became nearly intoxicated, and, in this changed and brave mood, mutter unintelligible soliloquies, which sounded like dignified threats against his foes, or smile vaguely, or laugh loudly, or sometimes start up, and attempt to say a Latin grace or chant forth a Latin hymn, until mildly interrupted by Mr. Pendergast or Patrick, and thus recalled to his usual state of caution. Connected discourse he scarcely ever attempted with his excellent friend, though often spoken to for the purpose. He never lost,

however, the most profound respect for Mr. Pendergast, from the first day he found a refuge under his roof ; but it must be added that the priest's style of evincing this sentiment was extravagant, nay, absurd, as were other features of his behaviour. For example ; upon no occasion would he enter or leave the eating-apartment without slowly approaching his patron, his head bent, and his hands crossed on his breast, and then making him a low, humble, and formal reverence, such as he had been in the habit of tendering to his ecclesiastical superiors : once, indeed, while absolved in the contemplation of a difficult chapter of a grand theological work which had occupied him for years, and was likely to do so to the end of his life, he momentarily yielded to the delusion that Mr. Pendergast was the bishop of his old diocese, and likely to give him a benefice in reward for his literary labours.

A sudden noise in the house, or out of doors, and particularly the report of fire-arms, would go near to reduce him to his worst former state of helpless terror ; and when thus excited, his conduct and actions were enough to extort a smile from the most commiserating observer. It seemed his impulse to hurry, at once, from his book-lumbered room, in order to seek and claim the protection of his patron ; and as he fled with a shuffling step down the stairs, or along the passages, broken mutterings of ejaculation or prayer escaped him, and he wrung his hands, smote his thighs, or, if very much frightened, had a fashion of cracking the joints of his fingers, which, either from peculiar formation, or long practice, made a sharp audible sound at each twist he gave them. Then, it ought to be observed, that in about a year after his experience of the good living of Pendergast Hall, and his indulgence in sedentary and even slothful habits, Father James's tall and graceless figure became, in one part, encumbered with flesh,—we mean about the region of the stomach and abdomen—his legs and thighs remaining as lank and as heavy as ever ; and hence, during any sudden fit of terror, such as has last been alluded to, the vivacity of his gesticulations borrowed additional grotesqueness from the peculiarities of his shape, loosely covered as that shape was by a very plainly-cut suit of clothes, in the ridiculous fashion of the time, and as old—(for he professed himself too modest, and too saving of his patron's purse, to accept a new suit)—as the first day of his entry into Clonmel, accompanied by Pendergast, Patrick, and Rory.

About the same hour at which Pendergast rode into the neighbouring city to make inquiries concerning the ruthless destroyer of his game, Father James issued through his favourite

back-door to seek a well-known hiding-place in the grounds, in which to read his breviary. He gained the spot without molestation, although, from his glances over his shoulders, one would have thought some fearful pursuers near, and had gone through the half of his daily reading, when two shots, in quick succession, sounded very near to him, and something rattled among the leaves and branches over his head. To curb the impulse of his nervous fright was impossible. He sprang from his knees upon his feet, tossing his breviary high in the air, unconscious of the action ; and with a shrill cry, ran through the surrounding bushes, he knew not or cared not in what direction. A few bounds and scrambles brought him into a space of clear ground, and he knocked himself, without seeing him, against the Mayor of Bull-ring, who stood there, leaning on his gun, his spaniel panting and crouching at his feet, and his hideously-visaged bull-bitch silently displaying her tusks at his side.

"Ay?" cried John Gernon, coolly, though sternly, as if in answer to the priest's thump against him ; which, it may be noticed, did not make the low-built Hercules waver a hair's breadth on his outspread bandy legs, while Father James was sent, by its rebound, staggering backwards ;—"Ay, in troth ! And whom have we here, this turn ?"

The Priest gave no answer, but stood stuttering out the imperfect accents of fear, his protuberance much pushed forwards, and his arms convulsively pulled backwards ; while John Gernon measured him with his cold, fierce eyes, and his bull-bitch continued to make her pursy black lips rise and fall over her set teeth.

"Be you the new king of birds and all game they have sent out to hinder us," pointing to his protectress, "from shooting a han'ful of wildfowl for the feast of the noble play of bull-bait, near at hand ?" continued John.

Father James comprehended nothing of this second speech ; but his staring eyes caught the motion of the speaker's hand, as he pointed to the bull-bitch, and a quick and wild association possessed his mind, as he screamed, "No, no ! not by such means !—no, for Christian mercy ! shoot at me again, but save me from the gnashing of her teeth !"

The Mayor of Bull-ring was puzzled. The priest's dress gave no indication of his ecclesiastical character, and why he should be thus scared, and talk in such a strain of having himself put to death, seemed strange.

" ' In good earnest, who be you, master ? ' " he asked, advancing a step.

" You know—you know ! " answered Father James, receding ; " And you are here, hot-foot after me, with that weapon in your hand, and that imp of blood at your heels, because you know ! " "

" And if I do, I was told it in my sleep, man," resumed Gernon. " Hold, now ! stand ! we mean you no harm, by my mace and sword ! Down, Maud, down," addressing the second object of the priest's aversion, as, roused by his loud words of command to his companion, she prepared to spring ;—" There, she is quiet as an Easter lamb ; and now, master, tell me——"

" Nothing—naught—no word, unless you stand still ! " interrupted Father James.

" Here, then, still as a stone, I stand, for peace-sake ;—peace is best. But tell me, I say, are you of these parts ? "

" No ! I give thanks to my God, no ! "

" Ay ? and why ? Where at present do you house ?

" Yonder—there—under that noble roof," pointing to Pendergast's mansion, which peeped above the trees at some distance ; " There—protected by the great owner of all these wide lands, and who says there is no present law to warrant you in hunting us down, or slaying us, or banishing us ! " Pendergast had never mentioned to his poor inmate, indeed, the enactments which had been levelled against persons of his religion, and particularly against its ministers, since their first meeting.

" Protected ? and hunting—and slaying—and banishing ? " muttered John Gernon ; " now I begin to understand. Another concealed rebel ! ay, and better concealed than the rest : I heard not of his being alive before this day. The great, and the noble, and the wise Pendergast tells you truly," he resumed, addressing the priest in a mild voice, for his own purposes. " No ; be you Papist ten times over, or, for the matter o' that, Popish priest——"

" Priest ! " again interrupted Father James ; " Man, man, who spoke of priests ? "

Gernon had made the allusion, still without suspecting that he parleyed with an ecclesiastic of the illegal form of worship, whatever might have been his other surmises ; but this ill-judged interruption put him on the true scent ; and another circumstance gave him almost proof of, in his estimation, an important and alarming fact. Simultaneously with his repeti-

tion of the word "priest," Father James vaguely remembered, for the first time since his escape from the well-screened retreat, that it was possible he might have dropped his breviary; and first feeling all his pockets, in an alarmed and hurried manner, his eyes strayed sideways towards the adjacent trees and bushes, and he timidly began to move from his place.

"Maud! watch that man!" cried Gernon, assured that the priest had lost something of which he ought not to allow him to repossess himself; and the canine familiar accordingly made a plunge between Father James and the point he was in motion to gain, and looking up into his face, fixed upon him her baneful glare, and exhibited, more amply than ever, her double rows of tusks and teeth. The ecclesiastic, returning her regards, though with a very different expression, became rooted to the spot. Gernon struck into the shade, and, after a short absence, again confronted his well-guarded prisoner. In his great horror of the bull-bitch, Father James once more forgot all about his breviary, and did not therefore look at Gernon to ascertain if he had got it in his hands. Subsequent reflection, however, hinted that the next words addressed to him by the Mayor of Bull-ring must have been grounded on a knowledge of who and what he was.

"Good day, now, holy sir," said Gernon; "for I guess enough about you. Maud! he may go his ways. Walk off to your grand house, I say, master——"

"I will; and I am thankful," assented the priest, "and the animal needs not to follow?"

"Not for the present: but look you, sir." He stepped after Father James, who, at the noise of his heavy tread, began to run. "Stop! a word more, I bid you!"

"Any thing—any thing in peace—in peace and good-will between us—'tis a noble brute—and a good house-dog—and an excellent guard to its master, I warrant;" endeavouring to look smilingly and approvingly at the object of his praise.

"Be sure of that," rejoined Gernon; "but listen. Go home to your fine house, and when you meet your friend, Miles Pendergast, you may as well not call to mind that you have met my handsome Maud on the grounds here."

"Indeed, and in truth, I will not, sir," promised the priest, earnestly and sincerely.

"Nor her master either," continued Gernon, still advancing, and fixing on him an expressive look.

"Assuredly no, genteel—and why should I?"

"Though on second thought, you may as well," pursued John Gernon—"Ay, do, do tell him all about it."

"Even as it pleases you ;" the priest did not fail to take a step backward for every one that Gernon took towards him, never allowing him within arm's length.

"And you may add something to it," resumed the Mayor of Bull ring, striking the butt of his heavy fowling-piece against the ground, at which the priest jumped aside, and barely suppressed one of his usual cries, and the bull-bitch thought herself called upon to show fresh readiness for service : "Tell him from me——"

"Doubtless ! of a certainty !" Gernon's deep voice rose high, and Father James was anxious, out of time, to promise obedience to any thing.

"Tell him that for young O'Burke's sake—and for his own sake—ay, and for *your* own sake——"

"I will, I will, by word and troth, I will!"

"Be silent, fool ! and hear, first, what you are so over anxious to engage for : keep your place, and listen, I say!—Hush!" A shot at some distance interrupted the speaker, and quite deprived the priest of self-command. At the risk of death in more than one frightful shape, he uttered the shrill cries he had just before scarcely controlled, and once more turned his back and fled.

But Gernon did not think proper to molest him farther. "No, Maud, you beauty !" he said, in his gentlest tones, to the loathsome animal, who waited but a signal to pursue the fugitive, and bring him back by the neck ;—"No, dearee, he's not worth the trouble : let us see what new comer we are to have on our hands ; and do you get to heel, Maud, to heel, and take no notice till I bid you."

As he spoke, he looked down a narrow and faintly-traced path, which ran zig-zag into more remote parts of the grounds, and saw a youth advancing towards him with a gun on his shoulder. It was Patrick O'Burke.

"Oh ; oho ! Paddy Papish is out a-sporting to-day, as well as ourselves, Maud," he continued : "that brave shot was his, pet ; and if I don't greatly mistake he heard that mad priest's screech too, and is mighty angry about it. Well, well ; God help us, this time, at any rate, Maud."

Patrick's appearance gave cause for Gernon's suspicions. His brows were knitted, his eyes kindled, and his face red, as he came near ; and he stepped to meet the intruder on his patron's grounds, haughtily and indignantly. Hitherto, he had

not happened to have been with Rory Laherty upon any of the encounters between the old gamekeeper and the Mayor of Bull-ring ; nay, owing to Rory's caution of permitting his foster-son to become embroiled with the dangerous stranger, it was but that very morning Patrick had for the first time learned any thing of the matter.

" My service to you, sir," he said stepping a few paces from Gernon, who awaited his approach, resting on his piece, and whistling in a low cadence, as he looked in another direction.

" And mine to you, sir," he was answered.

" What injury have you done upon the gentleman who just parted from you ?" continued Patrick.

" Gentleman ?" repeated Gernon, measuring him with a deliberate glance from head to foot ;—" I can't tell who you mean by 'gentleman,' young master ; but I do not care if you know that the mad creature who left my side, a moment ago, has undergone no injury from me."

Patrick, recollecting the peculiarities of his poor tutor, and his aptness to cry out upon slight occasions, was reasonable enough, in his heated mood, to give credit to this answer. He soon found another subject for talking on, however.

" You came here to speak on business with Mr. Pendergast, friend ?"

" No, friend." Gernon continued his low whistle.

" With some of his establishment, then ?"

" I know not any of them ; and on that head wish to remain as wise as I am."

" But our gamekeeper Rory Laherty, is not quite unknown to you ?"

" A passing acquaintanceship, merely."

" Briefly ; what do you here, sir ?"

" As briefly—who is it that asks ?"

" The O'Burke, and on Mr. Pendergast's account : so, tell your errand now :—answer my question."

" Perhaps—if you answer one of mine first."

" Let me hear it :" Patrick also rested on his piece. " Where did your worship attend to hear lawful prayers the last Sabbath-day ?"

" Impertinent fellow !" cried Patrick, haughtily.

" Impertinent ? and fellow ? Bother. Show me, and shortly too, that you went to church last Sunday—ay, and the Sundays before it, for as many months as we can count, or pay me twelve-pence current money of the realm, in satisfaction

for every Sabbath-day's worship you have missed ; such being the fine by law established upon stayers-away from God's service, and loose livers in this pious land."

" You shall not tempt me, by your rudeness, fellow, to forget who I am, whoever *you* may be," said Patrick : " but again I demand to know what is your business here ?"

" Sport—not business," answered Gernon.

" And, what kind of sport ?"

" Such as fills—this," continued Gernon, touching the already half-filled leathern bag which hung from his shoulders.

" With whose permission, friend ?"

" Mine own," replied Gernon, coolly filling a small tin measure with brandy from a wicker cased bottle which he drew out of his pocket :—" 'Tis a hot day enough, for a September day : will you please to taste ?" offering the measure.

" I thank you, no : but it remains for me to tell you, that you must henceforth have Mt. Pendergast's leave, as well as your own, to kill his birds, and other game, on these grounds."

" Oh, not at all : see, for example ;" he put his piece suddenly to his shoulder, as a small flock of wood-quests flew over his head, fired, and brought down two of the birds :—" Fetch me them, Maud, dearee," he continued, and Maud flew to obey his command.

Patrick lost all patience at this imperturbable insolence. " The ugly brute shall never take them off the grounds !" he cried.

" To be sure, no--but I will for her," said Gernon, pacing to meet the bitch.

" Nor you, either, by heavens !" Patrick sprang before him, turned round and presented his piece.

" Hollo ?" questioned Gernon, staring at him.

" Mind me, fellow," rejoined Patrick ; " your shot is gone, I have mine to the good, so take care what you attempt to do."

" Oh, brave ! brave !" exclaimed the other scoffingly ; and the words were scarcely spoken, when, flinging down his own piece, he jumped head-foremost upon Patrick, and with one twist of his arms possessed himself of his : " Stop, now, Maud ! stop ! I don't want your help this time ; only keep an eye on the lad to hinder him and me from any more scuffling : 'tis a pretty sporting-piece," curiously eyeing his prize ; " and luck is in my road, this morning, to make my own of it."

" You are robber as well as poacher, then ?" asked Patrick, whose wrath and courage united, though both of the most posi-

tive kind, did not prompt him to an immediate continuance of hostilities, under the circumstances.

"It can hardly be called poaching," answered Gernon, "to provide a matter of a few dozen of birds for the good bull-feast to-morrow; or robbery, to disarm a concealed Papist, under authority of the Act of Parliament of the last year, in that case made and provided."

"Put back the O'Burke's gun in hand, and quit grounds!" here interrupted old Rory Laherty, suddenly arriving on the scene, close by the disputants: he was also armed.

"Skirt him, beauty!" exclaimed Gernon, as, with the rapidity and certainty of thought, he wheeled round upon Rory, the old man knew not what was doing, when he found himself without his piece, and at the same moment felt Maud tugging his ample skirts, in obedience to her master's orders.

"I must soon press a baggage wain in the King's service, at this rate," pursued Gernon, "to carry Papists' arms to the Royal stores, yon," pointing towards the town: "and now steady young O," to Patrick, who again seemed to meditate an attack,—"I will shoot you as I would shoot a Papish rabbit, if you budge an inch—as for your gamekeeper (so called, but that's to be looked to, yet), Maud can manage him."

"Maybe not," said Patrick: then he addressed Rory in Irish; "Is he at hand?"

"Within a whistle," replied Rory: "and upon the wind."—"Brann! Brann!" cried Patrick; and Brann, our former acquaintance, now grown into the giant which Pendergast had predicted he would be, came galloping out of a near cover. The instant the animal saw how matters stood, his heavy ears, previously cocked, fell low, his eyes glared like live coals, his bristly coat grew rough, and he redoubled his speed to join his friends. At the same moment, still another power appeared in view, in a contrary direction, namely, John Sharpe, his old musket resting on his arm, and his—(need it be said?)—inch-long pipe between his teeth.

"Look to yourself, Maud! a shot a-piece for the Papists, and look to yourself!" Thus Gernon expressed his arrangements for his changed position, holding a piece in either hand, and pointing one at Rory and the other at Patrick. And promptly taking his hint, Maud freed Rory's skirts, and faced round to reconnoitre her more formidable enemy. "This is all fair," continued Gernon; "all fair, and prime sport;" the fraptious tones of John Sharpe reached him from a distance, demanding, in his own idioms, the meaning of the scene be-

fore him, and bidding every human being, and the dogs too, be quite still until his closer approach ; but after a hasty glance at him, Gernon proceeded as if he were not in existence. "I have heard tell of your Papish joyant of a dog, Master big O, and long wished to make him and my little beauty better friends ; now they are like to be in for it : so, we have nothing to do but look on, and show them fair play—Wait for him, Maud ! wait for him !" Brann yet wanted about one hundred yards of the ground occupied by his adversary, who, even anticipating her master's advice, coolly though ferociously awaited his attack. John Sharpe, seeing his all-powerful commands made light of, redoubled his exhortations in the other direction, raised his voice to a cracked scream, presented his musket with the left arm, shook his right fist, and at last, in an effort to run forward, fell.

At this instant Brann came within a bound of Maud, and, perhaps in deference to the beauty's sex, suddenly stopped short. Feeling no such scruples with respect to him, she was fast in his throat, in requital for his gallantry, before he seemed well aware of her intent. At the first consciousness of assault, or of pain, the noble brute chucked his head backward and forward, but in vain ; Maud held him firm. The great strength of his neck and shoulders was sufficient to raise her clear off the ground, and he often did so, but still to no purpose ; and in a short time, self-exhausted by his own struggles, as much as he was enfeebled by loss of blood, and agitated by pain, he submitted for a moment to the advantage she had gained over him, lowering his head, so as to permit her to tug hard, and uttering short and broken barks, while she did not suffer a sound to escape her.

"The bit will be out the next tug or so if he gives up that way," observed Gernon ; while Patrick and Rory looked on, utterly astonished and grieved at this inconceivable discomfiture of their boasted Irish stag-hound : "But stop ; what 's in his head, now ?" continued the Mayor of Bull-ring.

Of a sudden, Brann resumed his struggles to shake off his deadly foe. Then he jumped backward, and dragged her with him ; her dangerous tugging being now ended, and her whole strength exerted to cling close, and keep her gripe. They went back many paces from the spot on which had commenced the fight, Maud still dragged or tossed at the will of her captive. "He wants to get her into the water, the born devil !" cried Gernon ; and he had scarcely spoken, when Brann confirmed his surmise, by slipping into a small, but deep pool,

which he had gradually approached, and forcing the bitch with him. They sunk ; they quickly rose again ; Brann now above Maud, but Maud's tusks still in his throat, while the water grew tinted with his pure Milesian blood.

" And now he wants to drown her !" continued Gernon, observing that, indeed, Brann, easily remaining uppermost in the new element, as well by virtue of his superior strength, as by his skill in swimming, struck Maud repeatedly with his heavy paws, and almost plunged his nose under water, to keep her from breathing a mouthful of air. " Well ! if the ould soul of cunning Papistry be not in the body of that Papish brute, my name's not John Gernon ! Draw dogs, Master Patrick, draw dogs ! I consent to have it called a drawn-battle, till some other day. Help me, man, I say, or else the to-morrow's bull may wear his garland home to his stall !" and so saying, he discharged both the loaded pieces which he had hitherto held in his hands, evidently as a precaution against an attack upon himself by their owners, Rory and Patrick ; and then, flinging them on the bank of the pool, jumped into the water. Patrick followed his example, more out of anxiety for Brann's oozing wound, than for the life of Maud ; and both swam, or waded breast or knee high, according to the varying nature of the ground at the bottom of the pool, round their dogs. The bitch's teeth were now easily disengaged from her adversary's throat, for, in fact, she was half drowned, and sense and muscular power began to decrease together. " Take him with you, to the mass, if you like, a' God's name ! and land him at your own side, there," exhorted Gernon, when they had parted the animals, and each seized his own by the neck. " I will tow Maud to the t'other side, and I can but say, Master Patrick, let him meet her again on some fit ground, where there are no back-doors, in the shape of puddled water, for Papish cowardice to be the better of, and then——"

" And then ? and what then, ye limb o' the deevil ?" interrupted John Sharpe ; who, unobserved by Gernon or Patrick, had now gained the pool's edge, his wrath at its height, in consequence of his disgraceful fall. " So, Johnny Gernon, it is you—ah, you mother's blessing ! ah, you father's pride ! ab, you pet-bird !" all the while that Sharpe spoke these soft epithets, meant inversely from their apparent meaning, he grinned in his bitterest fashion,—" Well might I give a guess til you, a langer step off ; and so here you are, Johnny ?"

" Here I am," answered Gernon, not yet quite landed.

" Yes ; ay, to be sure ; and what good work have ye been

at, ye sweet nut ? (deevil crack ye !) what put these twa sporting-pieces in your hands, forbye your ain, there ?" John Sharpe took up the weapons, ere Gernon could prevent him ; but he said,

"Leave them where you found them, old John ; they are mine, by right of law."

"Leave them where I found them ? maybe I will ; and why not ? Yours by right of law, dearee ? what law, pet ?"

"The good law that empowers all loyal subjects of the King to disarm all Papists, wherever and whenever they shall be found armed ;" and short explanations from Patrick and Rory farther supplied the land-steward with the necessary accounts of what had happened before he came up.

"Ay, to be sure !" he then continued ; "oh, doubtless ; and all because the Mayor of Bull-ring says it ; certain—ly ! Here, Master Patrick ! here, gamekeeper !" he cried, suddenly flinging the pieces behind him, in such a direction that they could be promptly seized by their former proprietors, and they were so. "Prime and load !" he continued, presenting his own musket at Gernon : "ay, and slip in a ball each, if they are handy : my ain ould never-fail has one a few inches aboon her breech, already ; she has so, Johnny Gernon ; and now, mind an old soger ;" here he put his foot on Gernon's piece, which lay on the ground since its master's plunge into the pool ;—"nathless that you are Mayor of Bull-ring, you—where the horned deevil is, and hath taken up his abode by the side o' your ain sel—as sure as he is in anither place, and at the side of his dearee of a mother ; and nathless that you are King of all Bachelors—ay, and called captain of figs'-ends, and tailors' geese, and leather-parings, and wax-ends, Johnny—yet, Johnny, pet, ye will be moving from the place you stand, afore I bid ye twice over ; you, and that ugly brute at your knee,—ugly enough to make her own bairns strike her,—troth, ye will, Johnny ! and have a care how ye come rieving and plundering to our grounds, again, honey, so ye will : troth, jest, now, Johnny."

"Sharpe, do you have a care what you are for doing," said Gernon, in reply to this long exhortation : "I tell you, quietly, over again, the arms are forfeit to the law, being illegally carried by concealed Papists ; and—"

"To be sure," interrupted John Sharpe ; "only, who tould you, Johnny, that we are Papists here ?—and they are to be seized by all loyal men ; and who tould ye that you were such, dearee ?"

"The lad will not deny his calling," answered Gernon.

"Went he? how do you know, pet? And, supposing he doesn't, how does *he* know what is his calling? Does he know, this moment, if he ever had so much as a father? Tell me that;" Patrick did not feel complimented, although, in his own way, John Sharpe meant him well.

"As to *my* loyalty, old Sharpe, you shall get some proof of it, yourself, maybe," resumed Gernon.

"And may be so; why not? well to get any thing, these times: or, if not, obliged til you, Johnny, all the same, ye ken; only, now your absence would be good company; and there's the second time I tould ye so; troth, jest."

"The law has a word to say to fosterers of Papists, as well as to Papists themselves," retorted Gernon, stooping as if to wind round his wrist the cord by which he held his bitch secured: Patrick held Brann also in a leash—"Give me my own piece!" he cried, suddenly springing towards it: his foot slipped.

"Back, mon!" roared John Sharpe; "back, first, and forward, after; or, by the pipe between my teeth, I'll shoot you as dead as your great-grandfather—a body ye seldom heard o', I reckon!—Cover him!" he continued, addressing Patrick and Rory, of whom the latter only stood with a loaded piece; Patrick had disdained to arm himself in such a contest. "Never mistak' me, Johnny; I ken what I am about as well as ye can tell me: here am I, land-steward, and under orders from his honour, my master, as also is the gamekeeper at my back, to keep you, and such as you, from trespass upon our grounds; and because ye have trespassed, over and again, 'tis *your* piece is the forfeit to us, mon; and because it is a forfeit, we'll keep it, as sure as gunsmith made it: and so, for the thard time, jest, march, dearee—no disgrace to ye to retreat before odds, ye ken, wherefore ne'er look shamefaced about it—only march, march, pet, nathless."

With a baffled grin Gernon had been gradually moving along the main path towards a private entrance into the grounds, and now he walked on briskly, after glancing one look upon Sharpe, and saying, "'Tis a long lane has no turning, ould acquaintance."

Seeing that Patrick remained behind inactive, while Sharpe and Rory followed him with presented piece,—"Another day for the dogs, Master big O!" he shouted.

"As you will," answered Patrick; "any day; to-morrow, if you please, after the bull-bait."

"No, not to-morrow ; nor would I advise you or your Irish joyant to come to our bull-bait, young sir ;" and he turned out of sight.

"Gi' us a hand, lad," said John Sharpe, returning after he had seen the intruder out of the grounds ; "Papist or no Papist, we know you ower long til stand by and see you wronged by a bull-necked scapegrace like yon."

"I thank you, John." Patrick wrung the old man's hands, while tears, more bitter than sweet, filled his eyes. And thus is given, as was promised, the circumstances which produced John's second and most positive declaration of friendship towards Patrick O'Burke ; and as Mr. Pendergast had not yet returned from the city, it is thus also explained how that gentleman's proposed caution of John Gernon was rendered unavailing. When he did come home, and was made acquainted with the fresh broil between him and his young friend and dependents, Pendergast exerted all his powers of persuasion to keep Patrick from future encounters with the city bully ; and now, as was farther premised, he was doomed to be disregarded ; for in his heart, in consequence of Gernon's parting threat, Patrick had said, "To the bull-bait to-morrow I will go ;" and he was sufficiently obstinate, if not ungrateful, to hold by his resolution.

CHAPTER X.

AT an early hour next morning, the neighbouring city gave abundant indications of the public sport and festivity which were expected to take place within its walls. Its inhabitants, of the middle and lower classes, appeared in their holyday clothes, standing at their shop doots, or outside their stalls, or grouped in the streets, all discussing gleeishly the one engrossed topic. Among them might be seen the owners of the dogs destined to death or glory in the bull-ring, each with his important animal in leash, lest he might waste his strength in skirmishing with a rival, or encounter injury by being permitted to roam at large. Of these persons many were butchers, or butchers' boys ; and they generally kept up the most esteemed breed of dogs, and had them always in readiness for combat, because, the year round, they exercised the

ferocious habits of the animals by making them guardians of their shambles, otherwise much exposed and unprotected, and moreover, could afford to feed them on the diet best calculated to excite their courage and spirit. But the competition for bull-baiting fame was not confined to the city. From the suburbs, and even from remote hamlets and villages, young farmers, or young peasants, led in their fierce watch-dogs, to try their chance in the ring, under the eye of the mayor and his critical judges. These latter-mentioned canine warriors were not highly prized, however, as they seldom had in their veins the true blood for the sport, being either mastiffs, or half-mastiff and half bull-dog, or else quite degraded by a descent from the Milesian family of Brann. It is not meant by this that they lacked courage or strength in attacking the bull, or evinced more care of their limbs and lives than did their superior brethren : a want of method was the chief crime laid to their charge ; connoisseurs said they did not "fight fair;" which perhaps meant, after all, little more than that they did not display precisely the same tactics as those practised by the peculiar breed of animal which was arbitrarily said to be best fitted by nature for the perilous game in question. Such as the rustic candidates for distinction were, however, they invaded the streets of the city in great numbers, they and their masters and seconds, male and female, adding considerably to the noise and bustle of the holiday scene ; while bells jingled in the church-steeple, boys and children shouted, and the venerable bellman of the guild went his rounds, proclaiming in an authoritative though quavering voice, orders issued by the civic powers for the maintaining good order ; the passive man submitting without a murmur to the gibes and laughter of his own particular crowd of tiny persecutors, who accompanied him wherever he moved, and from the cock of his old hat, down to the tarnished buckles of his square-toed shoes, omitted nothing worthy of their satire.

At about ten o'clock, the place allotted for the day's sport began to be occupied.

In the middle of the town, at the widest end of the widest street, stood the market-cross. This was a piece of solid mason-work, shaped according to its name, some twenty feet high, and having a substantial pedestal. As may be concluded, it was the work of more Catholic times, and it had been invented for purposes of business and piety, conjointly. During public processions of the clergy and the people, such as were made at Pentecost, mass used to be celebrated before

it; and thus, considered together with the great event of which it was a symbol, and the rude sculpturings of saints and angels inflicted on its front, the market-cross served to create devout associations in the minds of the people. Its character so far established, it then asserted its influence over their traffic. In remote and loosely-organized times, the buyer in the market which used to assemble in the open space around it, had commonly to apprehend that the article he wished to purchase either was of a bad quality, contrived to look well, or had been stolen by the vender ; hence arose the necessity for his receiving some solemn voucher of the goodness of the commodity, or of its having been honestly come by : and in the absence of other forms, or of the means of obtaining them, he was satisfied if the suspected seller stepped up to the cross, and uncovering his head, and laying his hand upon it, swore to the facts required.

Such had been the ancient sway of the market-cross now pointed out to notice : but the growth of wholesome laws and arrangements to regulate buying and selling, as well as the change in religion, had, long before the day of the bull-bait, which many are about to witness, quite deprived it of its primitive vocation. Excessive zeal had even shattered it, here and there, for the purpose of exterminating the ugly visages of holy men, and the bloated cheeks and goose-wings of the little celestials which were chiselled, very barbarously, as has been hinted, upon part of its surface. And, in fact, the sole or most important service at present required of the market-cross, was, that it should securely hold the great iron-ring, which was to hold the rope, which was to hold the bull destined to be baited for the amusement of a more enlightened generation.

The space round what we may now call the bull-stake, was rudely barricaded at every side ; and, at two sides, very near to the shop-doors and stalls of the street, which were shut up, or otherwise secured, to keep off the pressure of the throng. Behind the barrier, where it crossed the street, and confronted the stake, rough seats of unplained planks had been constructed, rising one above the other, for the accommodation of such persons of condition as could not obtain places in the windows of the houses, at either hand. Immediately under the front row of these seats, was a small enclosure, within the great one, where sat an official person, with a book on his knee, and a pen and ink in his hand. It was his business to write down, before the commencement of the sport, the names of all persons who proposed to set their dogs against the bull,

which process he called “entering the dogs;” and he was bound to close his book a full hour clear of the time for slipping the first dog, in order to limit the number of aspirants for fame, preserve order, and ascertain who failed and who succeeded during the hurry and interest of the game. After he declined to inscribe a name on his important page, no man could, that day, present himself for a chance of glory.

In the angle of the barrier, to the right of this seat of office, arose the throne of the Mayor of Bull-ring, with lower places for his two sheriffs, and standing room for his inferior attendants; a second small enclosure of stakes and boards being thrown up around all, to guard against possible dangers from the bull breaking his rope, or pulling the ring out of the Market-cross, or, perhaps, pulling down the cross itself.

It has been said that, about ten o’clock, this scene of the approaching entertainment began to be filled. Already, indeed, the lowest of the populace were crushing each other almost to death outside the great barriers, and the windows of the houses of the street, from the first floors to the attics and sky-lights, as well as the tops of such as happened to have parapets, became alive with more respectable spectators. The rising seats, over the secretary’s enclosure—for secretary we now call the man with the book—were not, however, as yet so much thronged, for the reason that men, appointed for the purpose, kept them only for such genteel visitors as might come in a hurry, and be willing to pay a handsome price for admission.

The secretary’s work was nearly done; one by one, the last of the candidates who were ready to present themselves within the allotted time, jumped over the palings of the larger barrier, followed by their dogs, and ushered forward, and, indeed, permitted to make their jump, by two officials, with ornamented staves in hand; and one by one they were introduced at another spring, to the solemn office of the registry; and after having paid him a small fee, and seen him make some marks in his book, which they believed to be the letters of their names, one by one they vaulted back again, and took their standing-places, as best they might, among the rabble, outside the bull-ring.

But, neither the bull, nor the Mayor of Bull-ring, had yet appeared, and many anxious eyes looked out for their approach. A stir, and loud voices down the street, in the direction whence the latter-mentioned individual was expected to come, in procession, to his throne, seemed at last to promise that popular impatience and curiosity were about to be gratified. The

jesting, jibing, and loud laughter and exclamation which had previously arisen from the crowd subsided into silence, or into whisperings, and the glances of all turned to the tiers of seats above the secretary's stool ; for, by a narrow private passage, which flanked those seats, it was known that the master of the sports would enter the ring to gain his place of dignity.

Few eyes could penetrate down the street ; but the bustle drew nearer ; and presently, instead of the Mayor and his state emerging from the private passage, the fat proprietor of the head inn suddenly appeared on the highest and most remote of the seats, his head bare, and puffing and blowing from unusual exertion, while he said in a loud though hoarse voice—

“ Genteels ! neighbours, and all good lads ! here be a great man, from foreign parts, and along with him two ladies of his family, who having just put up at the King's Arms (a proof of his loyalty and fair intentions), and heard of the noble sport about to be proceeded in, are in need of a convenient place for the day ; wherefore I, Kit Holmes, crave for him and his fair dames, in the name of courtesy and hospitality, and in my own name, and in the name of the King's Arms, that you accommodate him with one upon the moment ; and well I know, the best you have, he shall have,—ay, your best of the best—your place of honour for the strangers ! ”

The professional zeal mixed up with this speech did not escape the keen perceptions of the crowd, and “ Bravo, Kit ! ” was loudly shouted in mockery of the inn-keeper, at the same time that no delay occurred, particularly among the more respectable people already in possession of some of the important rough planks, in answering his eloquent appeal. A party who sat in the very front row, directly over the Secretary's box, immediately arose, and vacated their places in favour of Kit Holmes's “ great man from foreign parts, and the two ladies of his family : ” and so soon as Kit had paid gracious thanks for what he chose to monopolize as a personal compliment, he turned his back upon the ring, and bowed profoundly to some one under him, who, it would seem, stood in the street. The next moment the trio, in whose cause he had been so energetic, appeared before the curious multitude.

First came, springing from plank to plank, a gentleman, certainly of some consideration, tall and well made, and answering, in his attire, to the inn-keeper's promise of his being “ from foreign parts : ” of his features, the people could scarcely judge, as his low-flapping hat, and the standing collar of his travelling cloak, were arranged so as almost wholly to

disguise them. When he had about half ascended the seats, he paused, turned round, and extended his arm and hand ; and promptly responding to his offer of service, a comely young lady, of eighteen or nineteen, also wearing a dress different from the fashions at present around her bounded up the plank as spiritedly as he had done, though more gracefully, took his hand first and next his arm, and then both faced the audience, and smiling and laughing, as they spoke to each other in strange language, continued their way, ushered by Kit Holmes, down to the place of honour which had been prepared for them. Before they stepped into it, however, they stopped short, looked behind them, and the young lady raised one of her fingers in earnest appeal to her companion, upon which he assisted her hastily into her seat, and then hurried back the way he had come. The spectators, anxiously watching for his re-appearance, saw him, in a few minutes, leading by the hand another lady, very young, very low and slight, but of a childishly reserved deportment, habited in attire of a grave colour, and having a decidedly foreign face, of which the tint was very dark, the nose long and somewhat hooked, the lips tiny, though well formed, the forehead strikingly high, and the eyes deep black, round, observant, indeed, almost restless. She did not spring forward as her friend had done, but stepped firmly, and it seemed, haughtily ; nor did she laugh or smile, nor cling close to her guide, but barely touching his hand, suffered him to lead her. Once or twice he stooped his head and whispered something to her, which, from his manner, seemed meant for her amusement ; but no pleasant lines played about her mouth, and she only looked up at him with eyes full of serious if not impassioned meaning.

They gained their seats. The good-humoured young lady rose to receive her friend, and it seemed by her intentness as she spoke, by her conciliating smiles, and by her pointing backward, that perhaps she made excuses for having left her grave companion behind. But if such was the case, her amiable apologies did not appear to be received in the spirit in which they were offered ; for the person whom she addressed only bowed with an air half humble, half offended, and sighing deeply, then awaited her time to sit down ; that is, remained standing till her fair companion had become seated.

When all had settled themselves in their places, the gentleman dividing the two ladies, they could not long remain unaware that they attracted the full attention of the crowd assembled around them : in fact, every eye was fixed upon the stran-

gers, and they must have even overheard some of the many conjectures as to who and what they were, as well as remarks upon their attire, persons, and features, which rather freely escaped the common people who stood without the barriers ; and the three young visitors bore this by no means pleasant notoriety each in a different way. The gentleman, turned sideways, his hat and cloak-collar now completely hiding his face, leaned his elbow on the edge of the enclosure, in contact with which he sat, and spoke in a low tone, now to one lady, now to the other. His black-eyed charge, when she first observed the stare of the crowd, drew a thick veil over her face, and afterward shifted her position, in evident impatience ; but her contrast—for contrast she was, being of a good height, and of a full, almost a jolly figure ; and having fair skin and fair hair, blue eyes, a straight nose, nearly meriting to be called short, and just redeemed from a turn-up ; a little narrow mouth, but the lips so rich, that when they closed, which was seldom, they almost made a circle ; a round, large chin, which promised to be double not long after she should become a matron ; and round cheeks, really rose-red, and deeply-dimpled ; this happy-looking creature took the admiration of the good people in a very different spirit. She, also, had a veil, but instead of lowering it, she put it quite up, throwing it gracefully, though a little daringly, over her head-dress, and then she sent her laughing, satirical blue eyes over the whole assembly, at first as gravely as she could, but finally allowing them to dance, and glitter, and half close in smiles, while with perfect self-command, and perhaps some contempt, she seemed to select for critical remark to her companions individuals of the motley throng.

This did not escape the notice of the causes of her mirth ; and in consequence, although upon her first brilliant appearance among them she had the effect of a suddenly-unclouded sky of a dull day, they began to take umbrage, and to vote her bearing and conduct audacious, vulgar, unfeminine. The passionate ill-humour of the lesser lady had already offended them. And in the manner of the gentleman, also, they thought they saw additional grounds for being angry ; for, though he still contrived to conceal his face, it seemed, that whenever his laughing companion turned to convey to his ear the result of a new observation, he stooped his head to laugh with her, and thus encouraged her in making little of the company around her ; an ungrateful return, to say the least, for the ready politeness shown to the new-comers.

The grave or scowling faces of the assembly soon evinced the feelings which began to rise in their breasts, and which they now encouraged by communicating to each other. Presently they found words to retort upon their provoking critic and her party, the glances and dumb-show with which she vexed them. "Trollops,—not ladies!" cried some. "No gentleman, wherever he comes from!" said others. "Randall Oge O'Hagan, with two of his mesdamoiselles, maybe, come in disguise among honest people, to see who is best worth overtaking on the road home!" proclaimed a country-looking man. He pronounced, in this accusation, the name of a notorious freebooter, one of the captains or chiefs, as was supposed, of the Rapparee bands, who had aided King James in the late Civil war, and who, after the termination of hostilities, continued to exist, as common highway-men, in the otherwise peaceful country of Ireland. And Randall Oge O'Hagan was so celebrated, if not admired, for his masquerading talents upon many occasions, that this hint took well, and was caught up and re-echoed by the crowd, bitterly, and with various modifications. The speaker himself drew some of the attention of his audience. He stood close outside the barrier, wearing, as has been indicated, a peasant's dress, and obviously a candidate for the honour of slipping at the bull a large mastiff, whose nose peeped over the planks at his master's side; and so far there was nothing remarkable in the man. His great stature, however, rising above the heads of the throng behind him, and at either hand, as he sturdily folded his arms across his breast, became the admiration of many; and the women of the mob praised his handsome face; for, notwithstanding its certain expression of daringness, it was composed of a fine, open, tranquil forehead, a Roman nose, smiling eyes and mouth, and a beautiful projecting chin, all of the largest order.

The people were not sure that the strangers understood the language in which these reproaches had been addressed to them, and, indeed, their subsequent conduct seemed to prove that they did not. For in nothing did they evince an improved sense of respect for their company, or a consciousness of having been uncivilly or insultingly accosted; and the cries of the assembly now assumed a menacing tone, many voices calling out to have the intruders dragged back from the conspicuous and honourable place they were thought unworthy to occupy, when a new event riveted the attention and interest of the more clamorous, and for the present saved—our friends.

CHAPTER XI.

THE clock in the steeple of the market-house, which towered almost over his head, struck eleven upon the glad ears of the man of the book, proclaiming the hour at which he was free to shut his registry, and decline to enter the names of any more candidates for the day's sport. Accordingly, he closed the ponderous volume, with a clap that startled his admiring spectators, and in a loud voice commanded some of the servants of the ring to lead the bull from his adjacent stall, and bind him to his stake, the battered and humiliated market-cross.

These proceedings, of themselves, diverted the wrath of the people from their imperturbable tormentors, and even produced some slight decorum in the critical young lady and her party : but it is to what followed we would invite passing attention.

A struggle took place at that point of the barrier over which the proprietors of the assembled dogs had jumped to approach the secretary. It was evident that the two stout officials there posted endeavoured to prevent some late aspirants from passing into the ring : voices rose high in altercation, and the guardians of good-order flourished their staves, and used their hands to push back the pertinacious claimant. But, after much wrangling, at a favourable opportunity, he cleared the nearly breast-high inclosure at a bound, and stood within the prohibited arena.

"The most Chistian and properst-looking man I have seen, as yet," said the watchful young lady to her companions speaking French.

"Ay?" whispered her male friend, half turning round to confront this praised person ; but checking himself, " You know, my dear, I must still hide my face from them all, as long and as well as I can ; but describe your knight, madcap."

"Tall, and about twenty-five ; well-contrived in the limbs ; well enough in feature for a man ; a smart, though somewhat rustic cap, set loosely on his head, a green riding-coat to his back, buttoned tight, as who should say he had not a figure to show, a sword at his side, spurs at his heel, a whip in his hand, ruffles at his wrist, and the sauciness of Lucifer in swaddling-

bands on his face, now that he has made that wonderous jump and cleared those plebeian grooms."

"Good, for a sketch ;—now tell me what else *he* is good for, or may be?"

"Hark, and know!—*There* was a fairy blast wound on the silver whistle slung round his neck!"

"To what purpose?"

"Oh, that you could see!—it has summoned, and brought to his knee, over the shoulders and heads of all opposers, a monster, of I know not what race, but I suppose we must call it dog, upon this dog-day, as big as a Kerry cow, and, heaven save us! looking as fierce as a royal tiger."

"And how many have both eaten up, as yet?"

"You must wait a while to learn, if I am to be your instructress—the scene grows too good to look at and tell of in a breath; only have patience, however, and I shall faithfully copy it for your idleness."

While the lively lady takes her own time to represent things as she pleases, other spectators shall not be kept waiting.—Patrick O'Burke stood patting Brann's head, and scowling defiance at her and his temporary enemies. The guardians of the barrier advance hostilely to him, and commanded him to repass the bounds he had broken with his dog.

"That I will never do, masters," replied Patrick, now smiling contemptuously, and speaking with assumed carelessness—"I am here to have my name, or rather my little dog's name, entered in your book for a tilt at the bull, and my business must be done—where is the man to speed it?"

The sturdy officials pointed to the secretary, enclosed within his proper palings; but added that the hour was past, and that it would be useless to apply to him.

"We shall ~~do~~," said Patrick, and with only a slight exertion of strength and skill, he alighted close at the secretary's side, impetuously followed by Brann, who, in making her own bound, struck the solemn officer with one of her paws, and somewhat disturbed the dignity of his position on his three-legged stool.

"*Ma graw gal gorcoon he war!*" shouted the always agitated voice of the unseen Rory Laherty, from the outskirts of the crowd.

"Never a better!" echoed the rather more visible John Sharpe, whose cross-grained face just peered in a mixture of convulsions, (from great pressure, treading on his toes, wrath against all around him, and approbation of his newly-elected

potegé,) between the scraggy neck of a tall old woman and the shoulders of a gigantic man—"Never a better,—lad ! til him, til him !—hu, ugh !"

But neither his own courage and address, nor the aid of these exhortations, enabled Patrick to gain his point with the precise secretary. The hour had struck, "and not even prince or king, ay, or the great Pope of Rome himself, with all his bulls,"—this he added sneeringly—"should enter a dog that day in the entering book."

"But you mean not to say, good fellow, that my dog shall not take her turn at your bull, if he and I fancy it?" questioned Patrick.

Yes ; the obdurate secretary meant exactly that, and nothing else ; nay, he meant more than that—he meant that Patrick should quit the ring forthwith, and take his stand among the good people outside its limits, as the bull would immediately be led to his stake, and the Mayor immediately follow, and time could not be spared for idle altercation.

"No, no, friend," said Patrick, "I do not think it is in my mind to undergo, anew, a squeezing such as I have just escaped from ; but since you will not oblige me in the slight matter I have demanded of you, you cannot surely make objection that I stand here at your side, to witness the coming sport?"

Strong and loud objections, however, the officer did make ; and when Patrick repeatedly declared that he would not move from his present comfortable place, he angrily commanded the two keepers of the barrier, who all this time stood near, and as many more hands as were willing, to force "the spawn of the old Papist" out of the ring.

"Hear you that?" whispered the observant young lady so often spoken of to her male companion : it will be remembered, that the remarkable strangers sat in the front and in the lowest row of the tiers of the planks, and were divided from the secretary's enclosure only by stakes and boards.

"If I am removed, good fellow," remonstrated Patrick, drawing his light sword, "it must only be after this bright steel passes through the churl bodies of more than one who shall dare to lay hands upon me :—and look you," pointing to Brann, who began to growl and pace round her master, "This Papish hound is to be removed too."

The voice of the secretary rose higher ; he appealed to the assembly against these blood-thirsty threats of one who drew upon peaceable and loyal people a sword which he was not entitled to wear at his hip, and many of the lower orders, particu-

larly those who, like Patrick, had come too late to be "entered," but who, like him, durst not venture to insist on opposing the laws of the Bull-ring, answered the appeal by hissing, hooting, and crying out to have the "saucy Papish cur" flung headlong to them, that they might award him his merits. At the same time, three or four of the most violent of the mob prepared to clear the barrier and reinforce the installed guardians of good order, and it seemed, indeed, that matters were to proceed to extremity.

"Can we do nothing to assist the Papist lad?" again demanded the young lady of the gentleman at her side; and hereupon they began to whisper earnestly together.

"Hold, fellows," cried Patrick, seizing Brann's bristling neck ere the foremost of his foes closed upon him: I wish to avoid all real violence if possible, and therefore let us strike a parley: provide me a seat here, at my back, and I will quietly leave your ring."

But when inquiring glances were directed to the seats he spoke of, no place appeared vacant, all having been occupied within the last half-hour.

"By well-managed packing and contriving, it may be done however," resumed the young lady, still speaking to her protector; and while she spoke, she and both her friends moved close together.

"Quit, quit!" roared Patrick's opponents, "there is no room for you among the gentlefolks; quit!—and take your stand with your betters outside the ring."

"Turn," said a low sweet voice, almost at Patrick's ear; and when he obeyed the command, his eyes encountered those of his new friend, as she pointed to a scanty seat by her own side. Surprise, and, indeed, admiration, kept him silent for a moment,—and motioned him, except that with much respect and ceremony he raised his hand to his cap, and stood uncovered and bowing before her.

"Haste, if indeed you are in earnest disposed to save us a broil," she resumed, speaking briskly, while she turned her eyes and head away—"haste, and treasure up your politeness for another time, and for some other person; doubtless 'tis not too much to carry about with you?"

"Madam—" Patrick began to mumble.

"Jump, Sir! we have seen that you can do that at the least—jump! and let us rest in peace and quietness."

And, thus exhorted, Patrick did jump, and so did Brann, uninvited, and in a few seconds was settled, to his great surprise

and delight, by the side of his despotic patroness, his huge hound trying to crush himself down at his feet.

The conduct, during this scene, of the tall and handsome countryman who had accused Patrick's protectress of being at present seated under the guardianship of the far-famed Rapparee Randall Oge O'Hagan is worthy of notice. He stood at that point of the barrier around which clustered the most zealous seconders of decorum, some of whom eventually entered the ring to support the men with the staves. In the beginning of the tumult, no voice arose louder than his in exhortations to punish the unbefriended Papist; and when those near him prepared to scramble over the enclosure, still he was earnest in encouraging them. And yet one or two shrewd and comparatively quiet spectators, who watched his manner and proceedings, felt half-disposed to believe that much of this show of energy was of a doubtful character. A smile seemed to lurk in the corners of his mouth at the moment that his words breathed the most uncompromising wrath in echo to the outcries around him; nay, the tones of his voice might be supposed to hide, in their very loudness, a mockery of the factious spirit which he caught up and repeated. It was suspected, too, although he readily volunteered to assist the reinforcement against Patrick in struggling through the dense crowd and passing the barrier, and although he even appeared to exert his great strength for the purpose, that he contrived to impede rather than accelerate their progress, in something of the way in which one, while playing with a child, will pretend to lend the urchin a hand to enable it to stand on its legs and run away, at the very time that one slyly manages to keep it rolling about on the floor. But more interesting persons must be attended to.

"Now, at the least, Madam; resumed Patrick, after he occupied his rather scanty seat, "you will permit me to express my gratitude for your timely courtesy shown in my favour."

"No; and for a good reason, because there has been no courtesy shown in your favour," the lady answered him, while her eyes were fixed on the people straight before her at the other side of the ring.

"In my poor Brann's favour, then?" questioned Patrick, ironically and half-offended.

"No, again; for fear of the old saying, Favour me, favour my dog."

"In whose, then? for assuredly here are but Brann and myself to contest the honour, unless that, without our know-

ledge, we are two dogs and two men ;—in whose favour then, Madam ?”

“ I have as much as answered your question beforehand :—in favour of my friends and myself, and of all peaceable people here, who have not come to see an Irish, or rather a mongrel Irish, bull-ring changed into a gladiator’s circus.”

“ Well, Madam, I must be grateful to Heaven, then, if not to you, for any chance which has gained me the happy——, I mean the honour, I now enjoy.”

Patrick withdrew the familiar word he was about to utter, because he saw a slight cloud begin to gather on the young lady’s sunny brow.

“ To Heaven, and to your guardian angel and patron saint, like a good Papist,” she added.

“ Good, or bad, or indifferent,” he replied, again hurt, and allowing it to appear that he was, “ I will not believe that I have been generously rescued from the common insult of the mob around us, to be ——”

“ Twitted with Papistry here? Well; and you need not fully believe it, unless you are very much of a mind to do so, and furthermore determined to wage war, as best you can, against every creature you speak with.”

“ On the knees of my Papist heart, then, Madam, I crave pardon for my unworthy doubt; particularly as your last words embolden me to think, though upon indirect grounds, that I have a right to thank you for something, after all.”

“ For nothing under the blessed sun; and yet try your genius anew at the game of seeing things out of sight.”

“ Thus, then, under your permission. Since I have not obtained entrance to this honourable seat that I might hear my religion cast in my teeth as a disgrace and a by-word, surely it was at least for the unseconded Catholic that suggested the freeing him of the taunts, and perhaps worse, of the crowd without—and even for pity I will be grateful—I, who so seldom find it.”

“ Still, I would counsel you, sir, not to be at the trouble, though perhaps there was a little of what you speak about in the matter, and who could help it? A unit of an unfledged Papist flourishing his bauble sword against yonder host of bold and brave loyalists! We deemed you an escaped bedlamite, here; or supposing your wits about you, wondered that you did not go on your knees, and cry *miserecorde*, from sheer instinct.”

“ Again supposing the instinct.”

“ To be sure; and why should it not be supposed? They

know it is in you, and in all of your tribe ; and ye are *what* ye are because of that knowledge,—second-hand men, and your wives and daughters helots of helots ; things are ye, made only to be fined, imprisoned, disarmed,—(how come you by that plaything at your hip ? think you to wear it long, after to-day ?).—disarmed, disinherited, whipped to church by the beadle, or threatened with the loss of double your fortunes—twelvepence each,—and voted unworthy of loyal housewives, loyal mistresses, (you rode hither to-day, did you ?)—sparrow-shooting, governorship of rabbit-warrens, and town bell-ringing."

"I did not indeed know—" Patrick began, but she interrupted him.

"Look again at the men in whose presence you have dared to think yourself a man, and thank God that you now breathe to feel a true repentance,—note the inborn superiority that sits upon their foreheads, and flashes from their noble eyes. See in particular the grand being just opposite to us, whose head, wedged in between two others, is gracefully covered with a red and blue night-cap,—and was it to his beard, and to the beards of such as he, you presumed to offer defiance ?—beard, I may say, for owing, doubtless, to the lofty pursuits of the week (he will turn out to be the free, high-caste butcher of your city, I reckon) it has thriven on his chin since the last Saturday at night to this present Saturday morning :—before him, and such as him, you bared your little sword, did you ? and deemed yourself worthy of slipping your Papish hound at an orthodox lord of the meadows ? (Heaven keep you, pray I, from the thought of whispering your bristly monster over these palings and planks, by-and-by, in despite of them all !")

Patrick did not well know what to think of this rapidly-spoken tirade. The previous simplicity of life left him almost ignorant of the worldly mode of finding a meaning under a play of words ; and whether the lady ridiculed him, or his late opponents, he could not exactly divine. He was, however, more disposed than otherwise to decide in his own favour, and at all events, he felt amused at her remarks, and once or twice had nearly laughed out.

After his timely escape from the secretary's box, those who had been pressing upon him, sulkily retired, at the prudent recommendation of the most important person yet arrived upon the scene, and left him to enjoy his seat in comparative peace. The ill-humour of the crowd still continued, however, against him, and when they had time to observe how he had disposed

of himself, it began to return in full force against his chance protectors also, and blending into one great current, this double flow of disapprobation soon became re-directed towards the place occupied by the strangers. During the lady's late discourse with Patrick, she resumed her good-humoured but mocking notice of the people, as may have been concluded from one of her illustrations, and the uproar against the unpopular visitors grew louder and more hostile than ever.

Perhaps because he observed this, "the great man from foreign parts," who, since Patrick's coming, had been turned almost with his back to him and his fair lecturer, his face completely hidden from the youth's notice, and seemingly absorbed in conversation with the dark-cheeked girl, moved himself slowly round, and made a sign for his second young charge to attend to something he had to say. She inclined her head accordingly. Patrick's eye involuntarily fixed on the reserved gentleman of the party which protected him, and who, to his great surprise previously felt, had not yet honoured him with a salute. The moment he looked, that person, evidently after glancing, for the first time, at him, was in the act of starting on his seat in a remarkable manner, but had withdrawn his features from possible observation ; then there ensued between him and his more communicative companion whisperings more earnest than those with which their secret parlance had commenced, and Patrick declared the young lady looking askance at himself, seemingly in much interest. In a moment afterward her cloaked friend again turned away, and she sat upright in her place, with unusual gravity of deportment, but with a new and lively interest still playing through her speaking features.

She did not hasten, however, to resume any conversation with Patrick, and he was studying what question to ask her, when loud shout outside the ring fixed the attention of all, and even those of the crowd who had been so angry against him and his satirical protectress. The people present caught up the shout, and the bull was ushered to his stake, gaining it by a passage, left open for him, to the base of the market-cross, from a neighbouring alley of the town. The animal was blindfolded when he entered the ring, a cloth being thrown over his head, as well, perhaps, to disguise its ornaments, until the fitting time, from public gaze, as to hinder him from being scared and rendered prematurely ill-tempered during his progress from his stall. But so soon as the cable ingeniously and firmly affixed to his hind-legs, had been secured in the iron-ring of the market-cross, his conductors

whisked off with an air of triumph his envious veil, and at the sight of his garlanded front and gilt horns, if not at the grand glare of his courageous eyes, another great shout arose from the spectators.

"Noble creature!" said Patrick, willing to be heard by the lady at his side; "how astonished and how inquiringly he looks at the unexpected scene around him, as yet unsuspicuous of the many foes he is led hither to encounter—though, there now! as the more currish dogs begin to bark and jump up to get a view of him outside the palings, he begins to have a misgiving, and to prepare for the fight."

No answer was returned to this speech; and Patrick continued,—"I do fear now and then that bull-baiting is but an inhuman and uncivilized sport."

"Especially for ladies," said his companion. Patrick endeavoured to explain himself out of the conclusion which he had certainly induced.

"Enough," she resumed; "the words have been spoken, and I agree with you and I do not. Use and the fashions of countries have much to do, if they have not all to do, with questions like this; and I have passed my childhood and girlhood in a country where ladies with blood-royal in their veins sit out exhibitions of the king of the pastures, which engage him in contests, not with dogs, at the risk of his being scratched, but with armed men, on horseback and a-foot, under the certainty of his being slain before the game is over."

If Patrick had a doubt of the seemliness of a lady being present at a bull-bait, these assertions removed it; but in fact it was nearly impossible that such a doubt, at least in any strong shape, could have possessed his mind: for from his childhood he too had seen the gentler sex of every rank attend such displays, nor had he been able to advance before his habits and his age, like Touchstone, so as to express his astonishment that "rib-breaking should be sport for ladies." But still fearful that he might be supposed to have ventured a reproof on the subject, he was about saying something very conciliating, when the approach of the Mayor of Bull-ring to open the amusements of the day, once more compelled him to be silent.

A squeaking trumpet and a dull-sounding drum, beaten with one stick, were heard behind the seats at his back, and then along the private passage which flanked them. Treble acclaims filled the air. The rude door of the passage leading

into the ring opened, and preceded by trumpeter and drummer, and by his bailiffs, and followed by his sheriffs, the Mayor approached his chair of authority.

His bailiffs, his sheriffs, and himself, were habited and appointed so as to give a grotesque, yet showy imitation of the real authorities of the city, whose names they usurped. He wore a red flowing gown trimmed with ermine, and much more embroidered than its prototype ; his ample peruke descended over his shoulders ; enormous muslin bands pended from beneath his chin, and his white wand was clasped with dignity in his right hand, while his left led on his beauty Maud. One of his bailiffs, both attired like him in extravagant emulation of their realities, carried his huge mock-sword of office ; the right shoulder of the other groaned under a mace, of which the top was a heavy block of wood, uncouthly carved into the likeness of a bull's head, and covered with Dutch-foil ; the smart cocked-hats, swords, and whole costume of his sheriffs were still copies of their proper originals (though in better taste, for the young batchelors who enacted these parts paid much attention to the gentility of their appearance) ; and even the masking trumpeter had on the uniform of him of the city corps, who always ran, swelling his cheeks and making a wretched noise, before the true Mayor of the loyal guild, and before each Judge of assize upon his arrival in the town : and the youth who smote the wet sheepskin of the drum with one stick, was a mumming caricature of the old man who always attended the chairing of a member of Parliament at elections.

And thus attended and caparisoned, the Mayor of Bull-ring stepped up to his high chair with gravity and dignity ; his sheriffs occupied their stalls at his left-hand ; his bailiffs stood with the sword and mace on the ground beneath, and the trumpeter forthwith issued proclamations to begin “the noble game of bull-baiting.”

CHAPTER XII.

“ HEAR ye ! hear ye ! hear ye ! all good men of Bull-ring !” cried the trumpeter : “ by virtue of his high and excellent office, and in honour and perpetuation of ancient times and

customs, his Worship Mr. Mayor now wills and commands that the noble game of bull-bait be here and forthwith opened."

A good-humoured cheer, mingled with laughter, testified general consent and approbation of the Mayor's orders, and of the mock solemnity in which his crier made this proclamation. The trumpeter continued :—

" And first, it is his Worship's will and pleasure that the laws and regulations of Bull-ring be well understood by all his subjects, to the effect following :—

" The noble game to commence by slipping one dog at a time against Sir Bull, till all the dogs entered take their turn ; and first dog first, and last dog last, according to the order of the book of entry.

" Then such dogs as shall have legs to stand on, are to attack Sir Bull in a body, for the mêlée.

" Any two or more dogs that forget their proper enemy to fight among themselves, shall be withdrawn from the mêlée by their masters, and not suffered to take to the ring again.

" No dog that has not been duly and lawfully entered shall encounter Sir Bull during this day's bait ; and if a dog transgress this law, he shall be dealt with according to the judgment and sentence of Mr. Mayor, even to extremity.

" There is no appeal allowed from the decisions of Mr. Mayor, whether in the awarding of praise or blame to the dogs, or in punishing them, as has been last proclaimed.

" And now, valour and good fortune to all good dogs of Bull-ring, and may the best win the day—God save the King and Mr. Mayor!"

While the crier adorned the close of his proclamation by a new flourish on his trumpet, to which the vapid drum and the resumed shouts of the people made answer, Patrick's fair friend said, " A timely warning in the two last mandates to all such as dare dream of slipping an unprivileged dog."

" We shall see," answered Patrick. In fact, her first hint to him on this point had not been forgotten, and she now spoke with a smiling sarcasm which piqued him still more. He remembered, also, that he had come to the bull-bait, and brought Brann with him, chiefly because John Gernon had commanded both to stay away ; and the refusal of the man of the book to enter his name for " a turn at the bull," to say nothing of the insults he had afterward suffered, farther tempted Patrick to form a will of his own upon the subject.

A description of the day's amusement may now be expected ; but notwithstanding that such an exhibition was called

fashionable in England and in Ireland about one hundred and thirty year's ago, and that therefore even a lady's presence at it in those days must necessarily be excused by us, it is not intended to proceed with the sport under the eyes of more refined and enlightened spectators of either sex. The fortunes of many poor dogs, therefore, as one by one they rushed to encounter the now enraged object of their unprovoked hostility, must remain dead to fame or to commiseration. But events are connected with one or two dogs in particular, which may palliate some slight allusions to the proceedings of the ring.

It was the arrangement, that the masters of the combatants should lead them in pairs to the little enclosure sacred to the man of the book, in order that while one dog was engaged, another might be ready, bristling with excited fury, to take his place in case of overthrow, or when the time allotted for a single attack should have expired. About an hour after the baiting commenced, the handsome countryman before alluded to, was called into the ring by name, along with another privileged person—his name sounding loyal, as Patrick's companion observed,—to wit, John Johnson. With a loud and hearty "Here I am!" he vaulted over the barrier, showing an agility remarkable in a man of above forty, and then walked towards the secretary, his mastiff led by a chain, with a step and an air which would have been deemed courtly and gallant in a person of birth and station. Having entered the secretary's stall along with his comrade, he stood close under Patrick's seat, his head upon a level with the palings over which the latter leaned; but before turning round to face the bull, he offered to Patrik, and much surprised him by so doing, a secret, smiling, and shrewd glance, and then pulled off his hat and bowed graciously to the young lady at Patrick's side, who, notwithstanding her self-command, and what the crowd called her audacity, blushed to her eyes, and looked confounded at the compliment. His politeness, in both cases, did not seem to be noticed by the multitude, so intent were they in watching the fate of the dog then clinging to the bull.

That dog was disposed of; John Johnson's comrade hallooed his at the enraged and bleeding animal, and John himself was warned to stand prepared for seconding his immediate predecessor.

"She's a stanch, true-blooded bitch now engaged," he remarked, turning to Patrick, "and I need to be in no hurry to loosen the chain from my own mastiff's collar."

Patrick made the man no answer. In fact, he had noticed his zeal against him during the contest with the secretary, and not suspecting its quality, as shrewder observers had done, wondered at John Johnson's insolence in daring to address him so familiarly.

"'Tis a great pity your own fine hound came too late for a tilt to-day, sir," continued Johnson, as innocently as if nothing had happened.

Still Patrick was silent, and now showed, by his brow, how offended he chose to be.

"He has the true ould drop in him, I warrant," pursued his new acquaintance, turning his back upon the ring, and confronting Patrick, with his legs widely extended, and his arms folded hard, while the mastiff's chain was held tight in one hand.

"And you—you, sir, have the boldness of the devil in you, I think," retorted Patrick.

"Oh, never mind me; there is little harm in me at any rate, whatever I may say or do, master; only, of a certainty, I never saw a finer ould Irish stag-hound than the one that jumped after you into the ring awhile ago; and I say again, 'tis a thousand pities he is not allowed to show what he can do against the bull."

"Mind your own dog and your own business, friend, or 'tis like that you also may have to complain of losing a chance this bait."

"How so, sir?" asked Johnson, smiling incredulously, and not changing his position.

"Were your eyes turned in the direction they ought to be, you need not ask, man; I tell you, that your comrade's dog is down, and that the Mayor, after looking to note how idly you engage yourself here,—and particularly with one whom he loves not,—has loosed his own bitch, and is now slipping her at Sir Bull."

"Ay, do you tell me so?" said Johnson, at last turning slowly round: "'Tis the truth, as I am a sinner.—Hollo, Mr. Mayor! what is your Worship pleased to be about? Sure, my turn is come now."

"It *was* your turn," answered the Mayor, from his place of high estate,—"it *was* your turn some minutes ago; but you have permitted the time to pass without loosening your dog, and that gives me *my* turn, to your discredit for the day."

"But is this good Bull-ring law, please your Worship?" re-

monstrated Johnson ; "sure it was not in the proclamations, Mr. Mayor?"

"'Tis good Bull-ring law, notwithstanding, Sir Idler. So, halloo, Maud, dearee!" and at these words Mr. Mayor let go his bitch of the atrocious countenance, and with one bound she gained the ring, and with another the bull. Shouts of applause at their Mayor's decision, and at the gallant attack of his favourite, burst from the spectators ; while John Johnson raised his hands and shrugged his shoulders, seemingly in patient resignation to a sentence, from which, according to the trumpeter, there was no appeal.

"You foretold my luck, of a certainty, sir," he resumed to Patrick.

"And after all your brass-faced hardihood towards me, since you came hither, and before you came hither, will you tamely bow to the hard judgment passed upon you?" demanded Patrick, now inclined, while he scolded him, to take the man's part : first, because his case of grievance resembled his own ; second, because he suspected that the Mayor had thus punished him, chiefly in consequence of having observed Johnson in seemingly familiar intercourse with a detested person,—namely, Patrick's self.

"Why, you see, sir, this much was in the proclamation, of a certainty,—that if any dog runs at Sir Bull against rules, he is to be dealt with, even to extremity—to the death, mayhap," replied Johnson.

"Pshaw ! they durst not harm a hair of your dog's tail," continued Patrick,—"nor of mine either, if I choose to slip him."

"But you would not slip him, of a certainty, on the risk, sir?"

"Would I not?" Patrick's eye kindled as he glanced towards the bull, and he stopped and engaged himself with Brann's collar. At Maud's first onset, she attempted, with consummate instinct, to seize the bull's lip ; the only grip, could she have taken it, which, as is known, can quell the animal's spirit. By a sudden jerk of his head, he baffled her, and for her own safety she was then prompted to fasten on him as she could, and accordingly made sure of one of his ears. Thus tortured, the poor bull, unable to use his horns, strove to shake her off by tossing his head from side to side, or to cast her under his hoofs and trample on her ; but he strove in vain. And this wretched struggle had been going on between them during Patrick's and Johnson's resumed discourse, until, just

as Patrick spoke the last words, Maud was flung off by her indignant foe,—not without carrying her own token of his ear with her, however,—and fell a heavy fall, nearly at the foot of the Mayor's throne, and for a moment lay motionless.

"Would I not?" vauntingly demanded Patrick.

"I do not advise you," said Johnson, gravely.

"Ay, by my namesake Saint and Ireland's patron, but I will, though, sir! And since you want the courage, see out this question of both our rights, my master."

"Do not," exhorted his new friend.

"Do not," whispered his fair protectress, gravely.

"Nay, but lady fair, *you* did not so admonish me a while ago; and now I say, with Mr. Mayor, 'tis too late to preach me up patience," replied Patrick, nothing but his hand now holding down the impatient Brann.

"She is not worsted, my beauty is not, and comes to herself within time!" cried the Mayor, who with his sheriffs had descended to comfort Maud; "and so, she is entitled to have her turn out. To him again, pet!" and he encouraged her with a preparatory and affectionate chuck under the chin.

"Not before her master!" exclaimed Patrick. "Up and off, Brann, you Irishman!"

"Still I say do not, Patrick O'Burke," again said the young lady, gently touching Patrick's shoulder; but this new warning, though it startled him, came indeed too late, for Brann had bounded into the ring.

"Holy Mother, Madam! you know me?" Patrick began to inquire, but what ensued left him no farther time for asking questions or receiving answers.

The Mayor had caught a glance of his proceedings just before he released his hound, and bellowing forth, "What's to do now!—the rules broken through by an unentered dog? Punish him, Maud! pay him! give him his fairing!" he let loose his bitch at her well-known foe of the previous day. It was at the same instant that Patrick gave Brann his parting exhortation; the animals rushing in nearly opposite directions, encountered each other in a shock. Without a snap at either side, the mere weight and gravity of Brann sent Maud rolling on the stones, and instantly taking advantage of her exposed condition, he returned her the caress in the throat with which she had obliged him about the same hour the day before; and keeping her down with his paws, and by virtue of his tenfold strength, strove as hard for a *bonbouche* of her "sweet body" as ever she had striven for one of his. The Mayor of Bull-ring,

suspecting how the battle would go, hastened with his officers great and small to part the combatants, at the same time calling authoritatively upon Patrick to take away "his hound of hell!" Patrick, however, did not stir, and a few seconds more decided the contest. Ere he quite gained the dogs, the Mayor heard Maud utter for the first time in her life growling admissions of inconvenience, and saw Brann's long jaws making short gnawing snaps without parting his teeth; and at John Gernon's next step, Brann bounded away from his unhappy victim, flinging something out of his mouth, as if in detestation, although in rage and triumph. "My poor Maud, is that the way with you at last?" inquired John, standing over her. She answered him by one horribly-loying glare of her unlovely eyes, rolled from her back to her side, and was very dead.

This seemed enough, and more than enough, to arouse the utmost wrath of her disconsolate master against her destroyer and his owner. But turning to look for Brann, the Mayor saw him in the act of perpetrating if possible a more deadly offence—achieving the veryfeat which the late Maud had failed in accomplishing: in fact, Brann was fast in the bull's lip, and the lowered head, dropped tail, relaxed frame, closing eye, and even low cries of the fine animal, told the fact, and the strange and to us unaccountable fact, that under this seemingly slight injury, his wrath, his courage, his strength, his very nature had abandoned him.

The moment he beheld the sight, John Gernon snatched his ponderous and dangerous mace from the mock bailiff who bore it, and crying out, "Kill the curse-o-God hound! Upon him, all good men of Bull-ring! beat out his brains! crush every bone in his skin!" raised the almost unwieldable weapon over Brann's head, who noticed him not, so intent was he upon Sir Bull's lip.

"Never while I live, base churl, shall you harm a dog of mine!" was Patrick's mode of objection, in words, to this speech; his demur, in action, being a spring from where he sat to the side of the incensed Mayor of Bull-ring, with his small sword a second time naked in his hand. But he was spared the necessity of immediate exercise of his determined valour. John Johnson anticipated his descent upon John Gernon by one of his own—although even a stop-watch could scarce have measured his claim to precedence—and while he said, "Tut, tut, your Worship, do not slay one of the last brutes of his kind that we have in the country," seized the

formidable mace in its very downward progress upon Brann's unconscious head.

Gernon, after one unsuccessful though well-meant tug and struggle to free the mace, measured his new opponent with an enraged and courageous glance, and while both still had their straining hands on the—heavy mallet it must be called, croaked out, "Whoever you are, you are strong, ay, and tall too, and a strapping fellow, as it is called; but will you agree that we fling this mace to the ground, and, while it rests there, try a fall in wrestling with me, to see who shall pick it up—the two best falls out of three to decide the dispute?"

"With all my heart, Mr. Mayor," assented Johnson.

"I doubt you," resumed Gernon, still eyeing him: "Swear that you mean fair if I loose my hold of the handle of the mace."

"It needs not that I swear to make you loose your hold, Mr. Mayor, if occasion required, yet I will do as you ask. See here—" and he suddenly relinquished his grasp of the contested weapon, and rushing past the bull to the market-cross, took off his hat, bowed his head, bent his knee, laid his hand upon the long-neglected test of good faith, and added, "By this holy and blessed cross! I will do naught, and attempt naught, in the trial between us, but what your own terms prescribe; that is, wrestle with you for two falls out of three to decide our little dispute."

"I knew it! I knew it!" shouted Gernon; "another disguised Papist!" the people readily seconding him, indeed beforehand with him, while they witnessed Johnson's old-fashioned form of asserting his honourable intentions, caught up the cant word of the Mayor of Bull-ring, and assailed the self-betrayed Catholic with loud revilings. "And shall I strive with him as with a generous foe?" demanded Gernon, appealing to the populace; "shall I foolishly hazard life against the hidden skein of the rebel?" This was not faint-heartedness, but a sincere conviction that all Papists were unfair and treacherous adversaries. He was clamorously exhorted by the people not to engage with Johnson, but rather to have him seized and disarmed of his concealed weapons, as the man he abetted was doomed to be deprived of his more evident small-sword.

"Assist me, then, liege subjects!" exclaimed the Mayor of Bull-ring, making a spring upon the mace which yet lay on the ground. But Johnson again anticipated him, snatching it up before he could touch it, and whirling it, like an hazel-stick, in

one hand, round his head, while he stood alone at Patrick O'Burke's side.

"Rescue your Mayor, men of Bull-ring!" shouted Gernon; and his sheriffs, bailiffs, trumpeter, drummer, and secretary rallied around him, in the first instance. But one of the clauses of the proclamation of the legitimate town-crier, for the upholding of good order that morning, had been, that all visitors of the bull-ring should go thither unarmed; and consequently the odds which now faced Patrick and Johnson had but hands, or else unimportant missiles in them, to oppose to the naked small-sword of the one and the well-managed and ominous club of the other. They therefore stood still, even with Gernon at their head, after an ostentatious show of zeal; and the insulted and despised authority of the bull-ring had to extend his appeal to more of his admiring subjects outside the barrier.

"I'll tell you what we must do now," whispered Johnson to Patrick; "I, as well as his worship, have a friend or two (working men on my bit of ground) among the crowd; and for fear of an unkind reception here to-day, God knows but they may carry something or other about them: so I'll just whistle for them—the poor fellows know my note, it calls them home to their meals many a time—and when they clear the boards, along with Gernon's cronies, half of them will be at your service (supposing that I give them another hint) in the secretary's stall nigh-hand to you, and half of them at mine inside his Worship's snug inclosure; and then—but I can say no more, only this—" whistling—"if you have the wits I think you have, I have said enough—do what you can, at all events."

From the moment he began to speak Gernon's reinforcement tumbled, three and four at a time, over the main barrier, and Johnson was compelled to interrupt himself, as they mustered within the ring. He interrupted himself, however, to some purpose. His whistle, as he had modestly premised, was indeed heard and known by his humble friends; for about ten or twelve men pushed vehemently through the crowd, as it escaped him, gained the arena of battle almost as soon as the allies of the Mayor of Bull-ring, and at first unsuspected for enemies against the power that was, continued their violent scramble forward, till they surrounded John Johnson, even before Gernon had formed a junction with his own newcomers.

Simultaneously with their movements, two, nay, three, unexpected abettors took the field for Patrick. For many

minutes previously he had been almost sure that he heard the half-hoarse, half-screaming, and altogether unearthly voice of old Rory Laherty expending itself at the rear of the crowd in unintelligible, though extravagant outcries ; and that of John Sharpe, issuing from his face, still punctually fixed in its last-described predicament, uttering a variety of authoritative threats, curses, and sarcasms, more audible than the accents of Rory, because he was much nearer to the ring ; both now increased their vociferations to the uttermost, even for them ; exerted all their decaying strength ; and while John Sharpe won his way by pompous proclamation of who and what he was, in name, in station, in loyalty, and in service in the field ; and Rory Laherty, by his strange and terrifying cries, clapping his hands, kicking, and even biting, both contrived to clear the barrier and gain Patrick's side, just at the moment, as had been said, that his colleague, Johnson, saw himself encircled by his faithful workmen. And scarcely had Sharpe slapped his new protégée on the shoulder, and Rory jumped up to kiss his cheek, than the provident pair of followers, doubtless having reckoned the chances of the day, produced each a pistol from his pocket.

It remains to introduce the third unhoped-for ally of Patrick. During all this bustle, the three strangers announced by Kit Holmes, of the King's Arms, had been standing up in their places, evidently interested to an extraordinary degree ; and the gentleman and the more comely of the ladies conversed earnestly, and with much animation, together. A moment before the arrival of Johnson's and Patrick's friends, and the mustering of Gernon's near to the outward enclosure, their words were as follow :—

“ He cannot be sufficiently protected, though—” the lady spoke—“ his opponents double, nay, treble his supporters ! ”

“ And now I see that they do,” replied the gentleman ; “ and so an end to incognito, even though it cost me something —certain detection, belike, as an armed Papist, in this Northern town, with you to take care of, too, Dorcas, you wild-bird.—No matter ; he has me at his elbow, in the name of old times and old blood ! ”—And with the encouragement of “ That's like yourself, Philip ! ” from the spirited lady, the hitherto cautious gentleman let fall his cumbrous cloak, drew his sword, —a more effective one than Patrick's—and the next moment was as good as his word ; that is, standing at Patrick's side ; and more than that, shaking his hand, warmly and smilingly.

"Baron of Crana!" said Patrick, in a suppressed, though very much surprised tone of voice.

"Hush, man!" whispered in turn his old friend; "for the present, know me only as your seconder against this peevish rabble, and I will tell you why at our leisure."

CHAPTER XIII.

INDEED, farther conversation, distinct from the business to be attended to, was impracticable between Patrick and Philip of Crana; for, even while they spoke the few hasty words already noted, John Gernon was eagerly instructing his subjects in what manner to make a successful onset, and Johnson also interrupted the friends.

"Do not make any delay, Master," he said to Patrick, "in getting yourself, your servants, the new-comer, and half of my followers, who are already at your side, into the place I told you of. See! only wait another minute or so, and it will be out of your power to do it," pointing to Gernon's side of the ring.

"You speak to the purpose," answered Patrick; he whispered a word to the young Baron, to Rory, and Sharpe, and was immediately followed by them and the men, over whom the countryman had given him temporary command, to the enclosure alluded to. The rush forward seemed to be construed into an attack, in the first instance, by Gernon and his numerous abettors; for they checked their own motion towards the disturbers of the bull-ring, and steadily awaited the expected assault. But when Patrick only led his band into the well-secured stall of the secretary, and there packed them close, while they presented a semicircular front, defined by the planks and palings which enclosed them, vexation succeeded to menace upon Gernon's brow, at the gaining of this advantage in position over him.

"Neighbours, there is *your* stand now," whispered Johnson to the portion of his people, who remained at his side. He pointed to the second interior barrier round the seats of the Mayor and Sheriffs; he spoke almost before Patrick had secured his own stand; and ere Gernon could possibly have recovered his self-possession, after Patrick's manœuvr'e, he

saw these men racing across the ring, like dogs of chase, tumbling themselves into his sanctuary of power and office, and presenting a second curving front, while their aspects were dangerous, though not much agitated, and each held his right-hand in his bosom, or else under the folds of his heavy outside coat.

To the surprise of all, of friends and foes, Johnson himself did not, however, move from his place in the ring. He stood quite alone, within a few paces of the bull, and the still tenacious Brann, shouldering the Mayor's mace with his right hand, and letting his left-arm fall tranquilly at his side. His figure was upright ; his whole air quiet ; he even continued to smile ; and yet, no one that looked upon him but felt a strange sense of his superiority.

"A word before a blow, now, Mayor of Bull-ring," he said, in an even voice, the instant the two interior barriers had been occupied ;—"And, stop that man!" he continued, more commandingly, pointing to one whom Gernon was sending out of the ring, after some secret instructions. "Stop him! I advise you ; send no message to bring down red-coats on us here, or you may rue it!" The emissary stood still of his own accord.—"Look ! Master Patrick O'Burke, his servants, and the strange gentleman at his elbow, are well armed ; so am I, and yourself will not deny as much, Mr. Mayor :" he smiled again, waving the mace round his head. "You don't know, of a certainty, and how can I tell, what my own poor fellows—being in fear of their Papist lives at this loyal bull-baiting—may be touching the present moment with the tips of their fingers ; so, your Worship sees, that if you do send for the soldiers, there is like to be blood lost before they can arrive, and none of it at our side ; nay, even suppose them on the ground, who can tell, I ask again, at which side the most may be let loose, after all?"

"Is this to be borne ?" cried Gernon :—"Good lads of Bull-ring, shall we bear it? Braved and bearded on our ground, upon our own day, by a handful of scurvy rebels ? The bachelor boys !—the bachelors ! as I have bid you,"—turning to the hesitating courier,—"Ay, and before they come, mayhap it may be shown that we can do without them. Care not for a Papist sword or two, men, or for a Papist bullet."

"Papist bullet ! ye speak a lie there, Johnny, dearee," interrupted John Sharpe.

"Tear up the street stones,—tear down the stake and boards,—any thing, I say—any thing !"

"Keep silence!" roared Johnson, as the excited mob shouted fiercely in reply.

"And upon that fellow first," resumed Gernon, pointing to him.

"Ay?" questioned Johnson, stepping quickly behind the bull, and drawing a large clasp-knife, "will ye, so? Look here! I do not stand alone in this open ring—I have a good seconder. Tear up one stone, or tear down one stave, and, by the blessed cross!—(I swear that oath again, to please ye)—I will cut the bull's rope, keeping safe behind him—and as he will run ahead of a certainty, straight upon his own Mayor and liege subjects, and as I can escape, meantime, to one or other party of my friends, then must ye all have something to do, without minding us, till ye have slit his throat or pulled out his horns!"

The courage of the assaulters was much affected by this threat. They stood still, looking at each other, or whispering, and there was comparative silence, which John Sharpe broke by one of his laughs, while he addressed Johnson in intended eulogy and approbation—"Ugh, hu!—jewel you are, mon; pet you are; and it's your notion, I like, lad; troth, jest."

"Shame on you, old John Sharpe, to stand there, armed against good and loyal people, by the side of Papists," said Gernon, now once more coolly, and as if loss of time had become an advantage to him rather than a grievance.

"You said that afore, or a thing like it, dearee," answered Sharpe; "and, upon the same, I gave a bit o' my mind til you; and now I say til you agin, there is na Papistry here to arm for, but crying wrong, the whilk must have justice; troth, ay."

"And do ye not yet know, Sharpe, although you had the time to learn since yesterday, that Papists, with arms in their hands, even if they commit no other crime, are traitors against the law?"

"No, hinny; not even since yesterday have I learnt as much; and I dinna think that your ain sel learnt it in your yesterday's lesson, dearee."

"Though *you* may learn it to-day, by heavens!" retorted Gernon, glancing over the heads of the crowd towards that quarter of the town which contained the barracks.

"Get awa' wi ye, ye deevil's darling!" exclaimed Sharpe, losing all temper, though such an accident was rare with him, at the same time that he hastily removed his pipe from be-

tween his teeth, for the first time in the memory of his friends—“ What bully’s words are these ?—Papists !—show me ae Papist fit to hauld a candle til ye, for deevilry, and all manner of raugues ways, or to any mon that taks your part, and I will shun him as I would an east wind.—Papists !—by the pipe, as good a race never cam o’ your ain blood, Johnny, nathless that it is a new thought that you put into my head—and you talk, do ye, and scare us wi’ disarming, and fining, and banishing, and what not, do ye ?—and my guid master’s child—for a child he is til him—is to be treated in this fashion ? He is, is he ? Then hear what I tell you, Johnny Gernon—as sure as you, or any mon for ye, does this injustice, in the name o’ Protestantesm, so sure I, John Sharpe, will forswear ye a’, root and branch, and go til the mass-house, itsel, with Master Patrick, the next sabbath at morn.”

This self-important threat, from which may be deduced the essence of John Sharpe’s religious rancour at all times, produced a laugh from the crowd, in which Gernon contemptuously joined, while he again glanced up the street of the town. Johnson, who had been attentively watching him, spoke.

“ I know why you look over your shoulder, Mr. Mayor, and why you would now gain time, without trying your strength on us, or letting us go our ways in peace. But have a care of yourself, man : you are the peace-breaker here. Your bull-ring law is no law of the land, and the young gentleman who disregarded it by slipping his hound at the bull, never gave you warrant, thereby, to raise your mace over the poor brute’s head. And if it is against the law for Papists to go armed, lawful authority alone, under the sign-manual of a magistrate, is sufficient to disarm them. Wherefore listen to plain and good advice—Ah, your humble servant, Mr. Miles Pendergast !” looking up and bowing to a window of the street in which that gentleman suddenly appeared, his face and manner showing much agitation—“ You are a loyal Protestant gentleman, sir, and well known for a just man, ay, and a kind one, and you are come just in time to give judgment on what I say.”

“ You need not tell me a long story, friend,” said Pendergast ; “ I have heard true account of that which has happened here, and I come to entreat or command all of my family, who hear me, to hasten to my peaceable home by my side, and to exhort any who would detain them, that by so doing the laws of the land must be outraged instead of being upheld ; moreover, for the content of very loyal minds, I pledge my word,

that no Catholic over whom I possess influence or power shall from this day go armed."

"And I was only going to say, under correction of your opinion, words much like the words you have said, sir," resumed Johnson; "with this little addition only, that if John Gernon and his mob now refuse free departure to any man or woman who may choose to leave this ring, it will lie at his own peril.

"Doubtless," agreed Pendergast, contemplating the legal liability only, and not suspecting Johnson's hidden threat.

"Mr. Miles Pendergast," Gernon began, very unwilling to forego a public revenge on his own ground, for what he thought many and great provocations; but Pendergast stopped him.

"Silence, Gernon! and keep the King's peace here,—where, from your holiday popularity, you are heavily responsible.—And you, Patrick O'Burke, leave that place you stand in, and pass over the seats at your back, to meet me in the street.—As for you, Laherty, and you, Sharpe, make your own way as you can, and face me when you dare for this disobedience.—Gernon, your objections will be useless; I have been able, before I hastened hither, to stop your bachelors, sir; so, if you have any wrong to redress, seek it at the hands of the law;" and Mr. Pendergast left the window.

"And perhaps I may," muttered Gernon.

"Brann first!" cried Patrick, joining Johnson. Their united exertions soon disengaged him, though very unwillingly, from the bull. "Go back now, and meet Miles Pendergast," counselled Johnson; "I stay here to watch you free of the ring, and fear naught for me."

"But I will remember you," answered Patrick. He again joined the Baron of Crana. It has been forgotten to be mentioned, that the two ladies under the young nobleman's charge had stepped over the boards before which they sat at the beginning of the disturbance, assisted by him, and stood at the back of the phalanx wedged together in the Sheriff's stall.

"Do not return to your inn, at least to rest there," entreated Patrick; "Mr. Pendergast's roof will better protect you; and you know him, since our first meeting, and may remember that of him which will leave you no dislike of his company, or misgivings of his hospitality."

Philip of Crana at once adopted this counsel. Patrick led the fair-haired lady (whose scoffing smiles of almost all the passages of the adventure had not yet left her lips and eyes) over the planks behind them, much in the same direction by

which she had approached the ring. Her protector followed with the little "dark ladie." Rory Laherty, moaning at his master's ominous words, and John Sharpe, silent and grim, but chopfallen too, followed in their train, the spectators, through whom they bustled, standing up sullenly to let them pass ; and all soon stood before Mr. Pendergast, who was ready mounted in the street, holding a second horse for Patrick.

Mr. Pendergast was prepared to meet even Patrick with a severe brow : when, perceiving him in the company of the Baron and his ladies, his looks changed into those of mixed surprise, curiosity, and interest, and he involuntarily held his hat in his hand, and bowed low in his saddle, changing his regards from one to another of the strangers.

"An old friend of ours, sir," said Patrick, observing that his patron's recollections had failed him—"The Baron of Crana," pointing to that individual, who trod close behind.

Pendergast's features brightened, and with much warmth and urbanity he held out his hand to the young nobleman, as he greeted him. Still his eyes wandered to Patrick's temporary charge, and Patrick made an effort to continue to deport himself as master of the ceremonies.

"You will excuse me, Madam, but, as I believe I am necessitated to announce you to my respected friend, and my best friend too, I pray you instruct me how it may well be done. Am I to say—" continued Patrick, his throat swelling against the probability, and his heart slightly failing him—"am I to say the Baron of Crana's lady?"

The lady, whose hand he still touched, after leading her down the planks, drew back a little way from him, fixed her eyes upon his in good-humoured surprise, and then bent her head towards her breast to laugh.

"My sister, Patrick," said Philip of Crana, who had overheard the roundabout question, and he now advanced with her to Pendergast. "My sister, Lady Dorcas Walshe," he continued, "of whom, if my memory does not fail me, you both have heard me speak, gentlemen, at a certain abstemious breakfast of ours in a wood southward ; and her friend, much esteemed by her and me," he went on, turning to the second lady, "Mistress Louise Danville."

After gracious salutations, Pendergast, his eye straying beyond the group, said, "Your excuses, Lady Dorcas, while I speak one necessary word, here—So, Laherty,—so, Sharpe,—come forward, foolish men."

Rory advanced, beginning to clap his hands, and otherwise

evincing a deep, true, and yet ostentatious sorrow ; John Sharpe, with a slightly bravading air, under which, for the sake of independence, he strove to hide some conscientious regrets, and not a little fear of his resolute master. John held his body and head as erect as if he were on parade, made his hands adhere to his thighs, stepped short and firm, and while his red-selvedged gray eyes sought the ground, sucked his pipe rapidly. "For Master O'Burke, on account of his youth, and because I but lightly warned him against this adventure at my leaving home this morning, there may be some excuse," continued Mr. Pendergast : "but for ye, men, both stricken in years, if not matured in prudence, and to whom I gave the strictest charge to guard your young master against all future rencounter with Gernon—for ye, what shall be said—or what have ye to say, or to attempt to say, for yourselves?"

"Just naething, so please your honour, have I to say for myself," answered Sharpe, only irked for the moment at the inconsiderable and extraneous chance of being thus arraigned by Rory Laherty's side, and, as it were, placed upon his level, as well in personal importance as in the commission of crime. "Just naething, only this—that I never gave the lad encouragement to betake him til the bull-ring, nor even knew of his so doing, till after he had left us ; and then it seemed til me a duty I owed you and him to trudge after him, and save him, as, under God, has been done, from the dangers he might encounter in an unprotected state ; troth, jest, your honour."

"You, Rory ?" questioned Pendergast, scarce able to suppress the smile which John's sturdy and yet crafty defence provoked on the features of all the other hearers, except Mistress Louise. But Rory would answer nothing, only hasten, by unaccented laments and strange gestures, to abandon himself to despair.

"I can say the same for that afflicted creature whilk I have said for my ain sel'," resumed Sharpe, his contempt of his humble brother becoming lost in his notions of patronizing him.

Patrick assured Mr. Pendergast that Sharpe had spoken truly ; that he had communicated his intention of visiting the bull-ring neither to him nor to Rory Laherty ; that no one could be more surprised than he himself was to discover them among the crowd ; and he submitted that their devoted anxiety in following him, to guard him, as John Sharpe had said, against danger, merited the approbation rather than the anger

of their kind master. "My sins be upon my own head, sir, but forgive my excellent protectors," continued Patrick.

They accordingly obtained their pardon, though with a shake of Pendergast's head which hinted doubt of the past and the present, and a reservation for the future. A few words from Patrick then gave his patron to understand the claim on his hospitality preferred by Philip of Crana, at which Mr. Pendergast expressed the pleasure he really felt; agreeing with Patrick that, after what had occurred in the bull-ring, it would indeed be better for the strangers to accept the shelter of his roof in preference to that of the "King's Arms." And in order to save even all the moments possible, Sharpe and Rory were despatched at utmost speed to pay Mr. Kit Holmes for the entertainment he had already afforded to his "great man from foreign parts, with two ladies of his family," and to stand prepared at the inn door with their horses, in order that they might mount and make for Pendergast Hall immediately upon gaining the loyal caravansary, after slowly walking up a steep street which led to it.

Having alighted from his horse, Mr. Pendergast's offer of his arm to Lady Dorcas Walshe was accepted, while he slung his bridle over the other. Imitating him, Patrick proffered a similar politeness to Mistress Louise Danville. She stepped back, courtesied low, and seemed to decline the civility with an expression which was partly one of pride, partly that of embarrassed inexperience. When Philip Walshe addressed a few cheerful words to her, however, also tendering his arm, she no longer objected, but, supported by a gentleman at either side, followed Lady Dorcas and Mr. Pendergast up the street.

"And now, O'Burke," said the Baron, "our amiable friend between us will excuse us a question and answer or so, for the sake of old times.—Will you not, Louise?" he demanded of her in French. She bowed her head, and sighed, in a kind of constrained humility.

"To begin, then, Patrick, you and Brann have thriven apace, since last I met you, in this Protestant air, upon heretical drink, (something better, I hope, than we had at breakfast once on a time,) and heretical viands."

"Would you have us never be a man and a dog?" said Patrick, echoing the good humour in which he was accosted.

"No; provided that you had imbibed good rosy-faced Catholic bumpers, eaten prime Catholic venison and smaller

game ; and that Brann had fared on the crumbs of your table, while both inhaled orthodox Catholic breezes, and ran free over Catholic meadows and hill sides.”

“ Then you pronounce us miracles of man and dog for our opportunities ; but having such a disrelish for our climate, our earth’s surface, and the dinner you get to-day, why are you found among us, Baron ?”

“ Ask the winds, or rather the whirlwinds, and the waves, or rather the mountains of salt water, which, without consulting us, sent Dorcas, her sweet friend, and myself into one of your iron-ribbed Northern ports, instead of suffering us to land upon the sandy carpet of a more Southern cove, Master O’Burke.”

“ Wrecked near at hand ?” asked Patrick.

“ Or almost ; and sailing from Spain, whither I had lately gone to convey Dorcas home to her own country.”

“ Where Lady Dorcas had rested since our last meeting in my father’s wood ?”

“ Yes ; though I had not purposed that she should stay away so long. But, in little more than a year after I parted you in the South, certain knaves so much occupied my time, and so disagreeably too, that for her own sake I left her where she was, well protected in her convent ; and afterward, until my troubles were over, I had interest to obtain for her as good protection out of it, in the family of a lady of the Spanish court.”

“ Your troubles ?—I grieve to hear that.”

“ But need not wonder, if your retired life and loyal company-keeping have informed you of the spirit of the times. You heard me tell to Miles Pendergast, at that breakfast, (still I must undergo a qualm at the remembering it,) the nature of my title to my estate.”

“ And remember what I heard. During your father’s life, your elder brother, Roger, was outlawed, at Meath. Had he lived after your father, and so stood in nominal possession, but for a day, of your father’s estate, it would have become attainted in consequence, and so pass for ever from you and yours : I cannot readily forget facts so like those which make myself a beggar. But he was slain before your father’s death at the battle of Hillsborough, here in the North ; your father, though he fell at the Boyne, fell without having upon him the legal taint cast on Roger ; and for that reason, died seized of an unconfiscated estate ; and to you, who also escaped law and outlawry, and whose name, if I mistake not, is included in the

Limerick Treaty—to you the estate passed according to the established laws and usages of inheritance."

" Harangued like a prophet come to judgment," resumed Philip of Crana : " Now attend. What you have delivered was plain as the blessed light of day ; and in the faces of foes and friends, I took possession, after a short visit to Dorcas in Spain, of the old castle, bowling-green, and acres. But, observe you, there soon started up men who averred the thing was not clear, but on the contrary obscure and doubtful. My brother Roger did not die at Hillsborough, they said, before my father ; but rather escaped from that affair to France, a little wounded, and there expired—in truth, they hinted, was

hanged for certain mal-practices, some months after the glorious decease of my brave father ; and this, they said, they could prove ; and after burrowing among the paper-lumber of I know not how many offices in Dublin and Paris, they cited your friend Philip to a high trial of the question, in the city first mentioned."

" Where you met them ?" demanded Patrick.

" Whither I went to meet them, but did not so quickly as you would have it. By some score devices and knaveries, which I thank my God I know little of, they contrived to postpone the trial, from term to term, from year to year, on pretence of being disappointed of certain proof, deemed ready to their hand when they cited me. But at last the day of battle came ; and although in the outset, they laid down such a story as startled even my own self, by the help of Heaven, good Catholic prayers and plain justice, my advocates talked and swore them down, and I was confirmed in possession of my plain right."

" Well, Baron, notwithstanding the trouble, this will permit you to sit in peace under a roof of your father's for the future, as your worst enemy cannot dream of shaking a judgment of so new a date," said Patrick.

" If one were found base enough to attempt the wrong, Baron of Crana," demanded Mistress Louise Danville, suddenly looking up into his face—" would he still be allowed to cite you to another trial, and put your title in fresh peril by a show of false evidence ?" She spoke these words in English of good construction, a soft and thick pronunciation solely indicating her foreign tongue.

" By St. Patrick, and I fear so, Louise !" answered the Baron ; and after his answer, she again bent her head to her breast, and relapsed into her usual silence.

"But pass we that, piously hoping no such chance is in store for us.—And now, Patrick, chiefly to apply my long story. You have heard the reasons which kept your sincere friend Philip of Crana from removing his only sister out of Spain till a few weeks ago ; and you will also conceive them, in good faith and kind heart, to be the reasons which hindered him from taking a journey northward, to visit a young growing giant of his acquaintance. In truth, O'Burke, nothing but the fear of not being left a house to bid you welcome to, could have made the long break in our friendship—(is it not friendship, and shall it not be such ?) which must have so much surprised you."

"Grieved me, only," said Patrick, "but your explanation sets all at rest."

"I will bribe you farther to forgive me, man : I ventured to the bull-bait to-day solely in the hope of chancing upon you there, after missing you at your good protector's house ; for, although bent on hiding my face—and my sword too—while passing through your Papist-hating province, I could not be so near the last of the O'Burkes without hazarding somewhat to take him by the hand, and ask him to come and see me in the old castle we have won, a second time, from confiscation and what not."

"Came to the bull-bait to-day to meet me at it!" inquired Patrick, in good-humour, and yet recollecting something he had felt, "And why not know me there, when you met me there?"

"Very plainly, O'Burke, because I did not see you there during the lapse of time I am sure you now speak of ;—you forget that, although I wished well to catch a sight of you, under direction, perhaps, of some town-gossip at my side, still it behoved me to avoid possible detection, as a Papist wearing a sword, by the acute people of your Northern country ; and in consequence I glanced not towards you as the hero of a bull-ring brawl, until chance showed me your features, (little altered at about twenty, from what they were at fourteen, and I suppose an equality of fortune makes the standing likeness) upon the verge of the moment that was drawing you into your last difficulty with his worship, Mr. Mayor."

CHAPTER XIV.

AT the last words of the Baron of Crana, Pendergast and Lady Dorcas gained the entrance door of the King's Arms, and their followers were compelled to end their present dialogue in consequence. John Sharpe and Rory Laherty appeared ostentatiously holding the horses of the young Baron and the ladies under his protection, although their proper servants stood near at hand, idle for something to do, because they had been deprived of their wonted office by the zeal of the emissaries specially despatched to fill it upon this occasion. Yet there was a manifest difference in the energy displayed by the two temporary grooms. Rory Laherty held and controlled the horse under his care with the self-abandoned devotion of one who might think himself immeasurably honoured, if not discharging an agreeable penance, in the performance of his imposed duty ; John Sharpe chucked the bridle of his charge, and often spoke high and reprehensively to it, as if he went through a task beneath his rank in the world, and yet would faithfully speed it, for obedience sake, and love of his master ; and farther, knew what he was about better than any living creature could tell him.

The Baron of Crana, his sister, her friend, Pendergast, and Patrick, all now gained their saddles, and moved for Pendergast-hall ; Mr. Christopher Holmes, who had appeared so elated with his visitors, while making his speech at the bull-ring, scarcely coming to his door to bid them a farewell, so much had his altered view of their politics, or of the likelihood of their stopping under his hospitable roof, or perhaps both views together, modified his professional interest in their regard.

A short time after the arrival of the party at Pendergast's mansion, they sat down to an abundant, though, in consequence of the short notice received by the cook, not an epicurean dinner.

The table was covered with substantial dishes, and all had taken their places, when a rapid and uncertain foot challenged attention outside the door, and, unannounced, Father James started into the room. He appeared in his usual, indeed in-

variable, suit of thread-bare brown broad-cloth ; his pale and pursey visage much distorted since his recent rencounter with the Mayor of Bull-ring and his odious familiar ; his paunch hanging neglectedly under his wide waistcoat ; his whole person slovenly ; his whole air unsettled ; and his hands, earnestly rubbing each other, inside and outside, and back again. Stopping short at the door, he advanced with his habitual and unmeaning tender of homage to Mr. Pendergast ; but at a sidelong glance of the strangers round the board, almost jumped, and showed symptoms of outcry, or of retreat, or of both.

Philip of Crana recognised him at a look, and strove to give him confidence by a greeting, half jocular, half respectful, and wholly warm. Pendergast and Patrick also addressed words of reassurance to the fitful priest ; and after much more hesitation, he at last dropped into a seat, and composed himself, in a degree, to be helped to food and drink.

The conversation at dinner naturally turned upon the events of the day. Pendergast required and received a more circumstantial account of all that had happened at the bull-ring before his arrival than he had been able to obtain on his way thither in the streets of the town ; Philip of Crana, his sister, and Patrick, alternately giving him information in their different spirit and styles.

Contrary to his habits, Father James, at the first mention of Gernon and his bitch, lent a greedy ear to the discourse, and with a terrified, though now not vague face, glanced from one to another of the speakers, sighed or groaned deeply, turned on his chair, uttered ejaculations, and even proposed some questions.

The matter of the whole relation, which appeared peculiarly to interest Mr. Pendergast, was the conduct, seemingly so inconsistent in its beginning and ending, of John Johnson, the farmer. "I should have liked to have seen him," he said.

"But you did, sir," answered Philip of Crana ; and thereupon added, that the man in question was the same who had somewhat familiarly addressed Pendergast, when he appeared at the window.

"Indeed ! that is still stranger."

"But I am glad of the chance ; for you can tell us who he is, and I cannot help feeling some admiration of the fellow."

Pendergast stated that, before the moment he had addressed him, he had never seen Johnson to his knowledge in his life ; "And that is what makes him a subject of curiosity to me,"

he continued : " I do not think so remarkable a man could be my neighbour, even for a short time, without falling under my notice, particularly as his actions at the bull-bait, and especially before the market-cross, proclaim a Catholic ; and a Catholic farmer, in this Protestant county, would be a well-known man. Oh, he cannot belong to us : and then, how and where did he meet me, to know me so well, and give me such a good character ? "

" I hope the poor Papist may get home safe," observed Lady Dorcas, " and that there is no corporation law of the city to punish him for the old-fashioned oath he swore."

" No, madam," replied Pendergast ; " there, I am sure, he is free, though I am not so sure that other laws, of more importance than corporate ones, may not overtake him on his road homewards, if they do not prevent his leaving town."

" Heaven knows there are enough of them, newly made, to do either one thing or the other," said Lady Dorcas.

" New laws against poor Catholics, please your gracious ladyship ?" demanded Father James.

" Against poor and rich, Father."

" Oh, the Lord keep us ! the Lord pity us ! the Lord have mercy on us !" he groaned, turned up his eyes, and smote his thighs.—" And all since the Treaty, did you say, madam ?"

" All since the Treaty,—the broken Treaty, sir,—though I have not said so before."

" And against the poor priests, too ?"

With a polite gesture of entreaty to Lady Dorcas, Mr. Pendergast answered this question, first entering upon a preamble, however.

" Good sir, do me the favour of attending seriously to me ;" he addressed the priest.

" Doubtless, Mr. Pendergast,—doubtless, sir,"—and Father James bent forward with an interest, indeed gaping interest, joined to his usual show of extreme respect to his patron.

" You have heard recounted what happened to-day in the town, Mr. James——."

" I have, sir,—I have to my great sorrow."

" The which places many, if not all, of the persons present, in some danger."

" Not me—I have done nothing—I was not in the town to-day, of all blessed days in the year.—Let them prove it !—let them prove it !"—his old tremors began to return.

" Upon no such grounds, will you be exposed to inconve-

nience, sir ; but, I pray you, still to give me a patient and serious hearing."

"I will, Mr. Pendergast—I do—God knows I do—He will judge for me—he knows my heart!"

"Then, sir, this is the point. To-morrow morning, if not to-night, I fear we may all expect a visit from some persons deputed by the legal authorities of the city—"

"Yes sir ;—Oh, the Lord look down on us!"

"These persons may search the house, upon one pretext or another. In that case, they must encounter you, Mr. James—"

"Me, sir ? why me, I ask again ? my hands are clear of it—I know nought of it—I—"

"But I have only said that, in passing through the house, our expected visitors must certainly meet with you, good sir—"

"No, never : they shall not. I will leave the house ere they come !—Thanks, worthy patron, for many a year of protection, and for kindness, great kindness, since the hour I crossed your threshold—thanks, excellent sir." He held out his hand timidly, after standing up, and tears ran down his cheeks. Pendergast, with a pitying smile advanced to him, and accepted his greeting.—"But," continued Father James, "I shall never stay here long enough to bring down trouble on your head. The laws are made again—the dogs are out again—and I must have a start of them on the mountains—"

"Mr. James, Mr. James !" interrupted Pendergast, "moderate these unnecessary and indeed childish transports. Sit down and hear me, and what I have to say—pray sit, sir." He half-forced him into his chair, and continued, "There is no danger threatened to me through you ; none ; and give ear to the reason ; because you are not known as a Catholic clergyman in my house—"

"Oh, am I not ! am I not !" lamented the priest, his accusing thoughts vaguely reverting to Gernon and the scene in the grounds the day before. Pendergast grew alarmed at the manner in which he uttered these words, and resumed in a graver and more impressive tone :—

"Assuredly not, sir, as I know of. If, indeed, it were noised abroad that I sheltered a Catholic priest—"

"Oh ! what would they do to you then, sir ! what would they do to you then ?"

"I should then certainly lie open to legal pains and penalties, Protestant though I be, Mr. James.—Nay, sir, I entreat

you to hear me speak. The trouble to me I think little of, compared with what you would be liable to in case of detection," Pendergast now continued, in the hope of making the priest's terrors work in favour of a course of conduct he wished him to adopt. "It is high time, Mr. James, that you learn your true situation. Hitherto, it has been hidden from you, out of care for your happiness, and in reliance upon your prudence; but you know, that ever since the year 1698—"

"Yes—ay—Oh, God look down upon us!—1698—yes—when was that, sir? what year of the Lord was that?"

"Ever since then a law of banishment against all men of your religion, in orders, has been passed, and rigorously executed. The said year had not elapsed without seeing four hundred and upwards of your brethren shipped for foreign lands."

"The poor priests! the poor hunted priests! Four hundred and upwards! The Lord guide them safe across the sea! God pity them, and us that stay behind them!"

"You that stay behind doubtless require the aid of Heaven to shield you from detection."

"Yes, sir, and pray for it every morning, noon, and night, upon our knees; and for our good protectors, and hiders, and benefactors, beseeching the Lord to grant them, in return, the grace to find out the true way, and the true church—"

"Mr. James, answer me: do you know what you stand exposed to if discovered to be a priest under my roof, after evading the law of banishment?"

Father James did not clearly know, but he conjectured some bodily constraint and punishment.

"Death, sir! And now, for the last time, pray compel yourself to understand the tendency of all this discourse. When the men I spoke of come hither, do your utmost Mr. James, to appear before them with a calm and confident bearing: speak not till you are spoken to; control your groans and mutterings, and other signs of great inward trouble. Above all things, in preparation for their call to-night, stir not from our table here to expose yourself to a rencounter with them in your solitary room; only, if you have left there any sure proof of your profession, hasten up-stairs this moment, return to us with the tokens, whatever they may be, and give them to Patrick O'Burke, that he may securely hide them."

"I will, sir, I will! may Heaven reward you! I will—there is, first, my precious papers—oh, Patrick, Patrick, take good care of them!—second, my brev—no! no! no! not my bre-

viary!—and where is that! oh, where is that!” He was running out of the room, searching his pockets.

“ Stop, sir, if it please you,” cried Pendergast. The priest became fixed to the doorjamb. “ Have you lost the book you speak of?”

“ Oh, I trust in the Lord, no, sir!”

“ Nor, Mr. James, have you cause to fear any person suspects your hidden calling?”

“ The Lord help me, I hope not, sir! Oh, how could it happen Mr. Pendergast? how, sir, how? Oh, where is my breviary?” and he left the room.

“ You, Patrick, do you doubt your poor tutor may have discovered of himself?” resumed Pendergast.

Patrick could say nothing on the subject.

“ And so, sir, you *do* expect a few visitors this evening?” asked the Baron of Crana. Pendergast answered, that from the last muttered threat of John Gernon, he made little question of the matter, to-morrow morning at the farthest.

“ I wonder what they will do to us?” questioned Lady Dorcas, smiling. Her smile was returned in different expressions round the table, and silence ensued; which was broken by a single, firm, and loud knock of a bony knuckle at the parlour door. “ Enter!” cried Mr. Pendergast; and accordingly John Sharpe stepped one foot inside the door, and then stood perpendicular in the growing twilight.

“ Well, John!” questioned Mr. Pendergast, after he had remained an instant speechless.

“ Your Honour,” John began, sucking his “nose comforter”—“I can’t exactly tell, sir, what it may turn out til be; but—” he interrupted himself to discharge some moisture which, smoke-impelled, was curving down the small channel in the middle of his nether lip, and he bent his head for the purpose, when, recollecting the presence he stood in, and the carpet beneath his feet, he became self-admonished and checked, by a short grunt which escaped him, and then took a quick run to the open parlour-window, and there held out his head. His pipe had been necessarily displaced for an instant during this process; when he again fronted his anxious hearers, it was in its old keeping, and, again sucking it with a solicitude and rapidity, resembling those of a life-preserving surgeon trying to resuscitate a seemingly drowned man, he continued—

“ I cannot jest precesely tell, as I said, what it is like to end in; natheless, I think it my duty til acquaint your Honour—your Honour’s pardon, a moment, but she’s cross-grained

this turn—" still meaning his pipe, which he a second time paused to inspire with life, by tapping his fore-finger upon the ashes at its mouth—"but, as I was a-going to say til your Honour, I've been watching, for the last half-hour—awa' wi' ye!" breaking up his narrative for the third time, to twitch off a spark which alighted upon the bridge of his nose.

"Watching what, this half hour, John Sharpe?" patiently demanded his master, for he knew him, and his habits and practices.

"Naething mair nor less than a matter of five or sax strange bodies hiding about your Honour's grounds," at last answered Sharpe.

"Ay, what mean you by strange bodies?"

"People not of these parts, I'll tak' my davy, sir."

"Not belonging to us, or living on our farms?"

"Belike, your Honour."

"But resembling men from the city?"

"I will not jest eexactly be bound til say, sir."

"And they were hiding—that is, so demeaning themselves as to seem to shun being seen?"

"Even sae, Captain Pendergast."

"Some of the visiters I promised you, Baron," resumed Pendergast, addressing his guest, "sent on before more important persons to guard against escape from the house, perhaps."

"What are we to do, sir?—Fight?" asked the Baron.

"Fight, doubtless," answered Sharpe.

"By no means," answered Pendergast; "it will prove as much as we can do to come off well by our utmost civility; but being in my house an honoured guest, I am sure you will be said by me;—and first then, how shall we best dispose of the ladies?"

"By letting them stay where they are, to be sure, Mr. Pendergast," answered Lady Dorcas, while she still smiled.

"Yes," concurred her brother, "even Dorcas and her friend have no fears of a Mayor of Bull-ring changed into his master's—the true town Mayor's bailiff, I suppose.—But what do the fellows want? What will they ask, think you? our swords, and some shillings to drink our healths and damn the Pope in, I reckon?"

"Among other things, *your* sword, I think I may safely answer you."

"Here, then," he cast it on the ground near the door—"since I am not to use it, the scum shall never even demand it of me.—Louise, child, I have a thing to tell you," and lead-

ing the serious, but now highly-excited young lady to a remote seat, he began to address her in a light gay strain, which she listened to, and sometimes answered with remarkable energy and interest, often shaking her head, and once or twice suddenly flashing upon him an upward glance.

"Lady Dorcas, I grieve for the trouble you are about to be put to in this house, where I deemed you would meet shelter," said Patrick.

"I call it not trouble, sir; on the contrary, I like to study these pleasing little traits of Christian love towards us; and my chief interest still is to learn what under the sun they can purpose to do to us all? Your sword, along with Philip's, is gone of course, (I believe I foretold it;) but what after that? and, of all things, what to my friend Louise and myself?"

Pendergast had been whispering John Sharpe, who nodded approvingly and obediently, as his master pointed out at the window towards the wood, in the direction of Rory Laherty's hut. All in the parlour were startled by vehement cries in the hall.

"The demented creature his ain sel'," said John Sharpe.

"Having been surprised in his dwelling, doubtless," observed Pendergast, "and now escaped during the seizure of the very things we want to hide from notice."

"Nae, troth," resumed Sharpe, looking out into the hall; "he has them in a lump in his arms—Hauld your tonge, ye half-savage mon!" he called out to the gamekeeper, "and come in her til his Honour."

Rory accordingly ran into the room, carrying, wrapped up in the old vestment worn by Father James while saying mass in his hut, the utensils used at the altar during that ceremony.

When prevailed upon to hush his cries, and give a rational explanation of his conduct and terrors, it appeared that, although his dwelling had not yet been invaded, he apprehended it might be, in consequence of having observed suspicious persons lurking about it; and therefore, acting upon a foresight which astonished John Sharpe, he had escaped from it with the proofs of concealed Papistry it contained, the self-same articles that Mr. Pendergast had been advising with his steward to have removed to a place of safety, as the former has already hinted. But the most remarkable feature of Rory's story proved upon examination to be this; although he had caught glimpses of full as many strangers on the grounds as John Sharpe had done, they could not both have observed the same men, inasmuch as their discoveries took place at the same

moment, but at a considerable distance from each other. Mr. Pendergast pronounced it extraordinary that such a number of persons should assemble so near his house, for the purpose of making him a legal visit, and not remain together. Still he supposed they sauntered about, awaiting the arrival of their accredited leader.

He despatched Patrick to secrete the burden under which Rory had come laden; and his protégé had scarce left the room, when new matter to be wondered at occurred. A female servant, panting for breath, and pale as a ghost, tottered in with the strange intelligence, that, while discharging some of her duties above-stairs, she had seen a man's foot protruded from under her master's bed; and there was not time to question her closer upon the subject, when horrible outcries resounded through the house, from that quarter of it inhabited by Father James, at the same time that he was heard—all concluded it was he—tumbling and striding, alternately, down-stairs into the hall. The next moment he rushed in among the company, quiet wild with fright; and his anecdote was, that, in searching for his breviary, he had happened to fling aside the door of a closet, which he seldom opened, and there, with scarce room enough about him to contain a common-sized figure of flesh and blood, the Priest averred that he beheld either some one lying in wait to take his life, or else an incarnation of the enemy of man.

To complete the effect of vague terror beginning to be produced by all this, Patrick re-entered the apartment, also with a hurried step and an excited visage, fixing his eyes on Mr. Pendergast, who immediately demanded,—“ You, too, have encountered your bugbear, O' Burke ?”

“ No bugbear to me, sir ; but I assuredly have met a person concealed in the house.”

“ And not called him before us ?”

“ No, Mr. Pendergast ; and for reasons which you may soon understand.”

“ Upon John Gernon's arrival, I suppose ;—Well, then here he comes at last to relieve all the suspense and doubt he makes us suffer.”

Pendergast advanced to the open window, as the noise of horses, galloping at a distance, reached all in the parlour ; and the evening was not yet so dark but he could see a body of mounted men, in military attire, moving at a good rate down the rough hill-road which wound to his house.

"Now for our beads and paternosters," said Lady Dorcas to Patrick.

"It may be more serious play than your ladyship reckons on," he replied gravely. "Pray, permit me to lead you into this retired chamber."

"What, sir! to find there a second appearance of Father James's incarnate friend? No, no; my brother's arm for me, and I beseech you not to try to affright us with your looks."

"I cannot communicate what I do not feel, madam; but you do not know what I mean," said Patrick.

"I feel chilly from the open window," observed Philip Walshe, giving a slight yawn and shudder—"So, O'Burke, a cup of claret with you."

"John approaches us in force," resumed Pendergast, as the horsemen clattered into the outer yard of the mansion; "and still I wonder, and wonder more than ever, why he should think it necessary so to do, after having despatched before himself some score men, from all accounts, to surround us in our fortress, and even invest it, by stealth."

"These matters may still more surprise you, sir, when you see them out," said Patrick.

"Perhaps, O'Burke; but why do not our visitors come at once into the house? Oh! they make themselves at home, and lead their horses to the stables. Well, they are welcome; and let them have no difficulty in gaining our presence; let there be no brawling or battering at our gates and doors.—John Sharpe, go you and see that lock and bar offer them no opposition."

"I am spared a task sae much against my stomach, your Honour," answered John; "for, without encountering a gainsay, here they be, the deevil's pet-birds.—Ah, Johnny—ah, you dearee!" he continued, accosting Gernon, who entered the parlour while he spoke.

The Mayor of Bull-ring now exhibited in the trappings of a new character. He wore his full uniform as captain of the company of "Bachelor-boys," over whom, it has been said, he held honoured command; and well did he become his steel cap, buff jacket, and ponderous boots. And, notwithstanding the handsome sword at his hip, and his more official badges of superiority, a sash and gorget, John carried in his hand a carabine, with a bayonet, like the privates of his corps, three of whom followed him into the apartment,—evidently, by their looks and manner, three men picked from among their more handicraft

and even-tempered fellow-soldiers, to do their captain's present work well, and as he should like it.

"A good evening, Mr. Miles Pendergast," began Gernon, taking no notice of Sharpe's taunting salutation; and while speaking these words, he neither touched his cap nor bowed.

"Good evening, John," answered the master of the house.

"I know you are glad to see me, sir."

"I am not much disturbed, John."

"Why should you, Mr. Pendergast: all fair: and as we had a hard trot of it, though the distance is little, do you know, sir, I feel thirsty :" and he let his heavy body drop into a seat at the table, his sword and accoutrements ringing bravely, and seized the half-empty claret-bottle which the Baron of Crana had just laid down. With scarce a glance at him, and with a smile, rather than a frown, the young Catholic aristocrat said to Patrick, who sat at his side—"Then, as I was telling you, O'Burke—but let us seek a nook"—and quietly arose, upon this finesse, from the board shared by John Gernon, and offered his arm to his sister. The three friends then fell back from the visitors, followed by Mistress Louise; while Rory Laherty, edged round by the walls towards his foster-son, John Sharpe remained posted upright at the door, and Mr. Pendergast sought out Father James in the corner the most remote from the now palpable objects of his horror, and with a whisper and a touch of his hand, implored him to be prudent, and fear nothing. In this situation Pendergast faced the open window, Gernon having his back to it, as also had his followers, who stood behind his chair. The window was about a man's full height from a turfу lawn. The eye of the master of the house strayed to it, and he seemed to get a glimpse, for an instant, of a roughly featured face peeping over the lower part of its frame-work into the parlour. When Pendergast looked more attentively, however, the vision, or the reality, was gone; but now he could not be deceived in the fact, that the figures of five or six men hurried across the darkening lawn at some distance from the house.

Gernon noticed, and no doubt felt, the withdrawing of Philip Walshe from the table. He followed the motions of the haughty young nobleman with a staring eye and compressed lips. Then, however, he seemed disposed to pay him back, for the moment, some of his own cool indifference; for he also smiled before he raised a bumper of the claret to his lips, and when he had drank it off, he pronounced it good, with a smack, and filling his glass again, handed it backwards, not turning his

head, to one of his comrades, and said—"Try it, Tom, and if you speak well of it to your cronies there, who knows but they may live to taste it in their turn.—Where are you, our worthy host?" he continued, looking round the room for Mr. Pendergast—"Oh, yonder, keeping up your poor relation's spirits : well, and that's as it ought to be ; blood is thicker than water : the gentleman is from far South, I reckon ?"

"Certainly from the South, John."

"I thought as much ; and related to you by your own blood, or through your excellent lady deceased, which, sir ? the report of the country says by your own blood, and yet I don't half believe it."

"Then you are sagacious, John, as I always deemed you to be ; not by my own blood, assuredly."

"See what a guess I had, Mr. Pendergast, as you say. And you call him one Mr. James, I am told ?"

Scarce able to restrain some vague fancy of the priest from breaking out into words if not actions, Pendergast answered, "James is his name."

"I wonder have he and I ever met before to-night.—What ails the gentleman ? is he ill, sir ?" as a boding groan escaped the trembling ecclesiastic ; "But it grows so dark I cannot discern his features.—Lights, old John Sharpe," he continued, swinging himself round to that person.

"Lights, dearee ?" questioned John, "lights for ye, and at your bidding ? Yes, ay, to be sure, and why not ? But do ye ken the kind, and the only kind, ye'll ever get a hand frae me to help ye to ? If not, I'se tell ye ; I'd venture and step, Johnny, inside the gate out of whilk 'tis said there's nae return, and ane short run across the het floor o' the same place, just to carry in a fresh-kindled fagot for your comfortable bed, hinny, troth would I ; but till the time comes that I can so far help ye, ye'se have nae chamber-lights at your pleasure frae John Sharpe, pet."

"Good, John," said Gernon, laughing ; "good, and like yourself, old crab-apple.—But, Mr. Pendergast, *you* will order us what we ask for, I am assured."

"Begone this moment, John Sharpe, and fetch in the things demanded, and with your own hands ; I wish not that another servant enters here, perhaps to create confusion," said Pendergast, in a voice not to be disregarded ; and with many mutterings, wrathful and bitter, and with another laugh from Gernon, in which his trusty men joined, the mortified steward was compelled to withdraw.

A silence took place in the parlour until his return, only broken by a shuffling of Father James's feet in his corner, and by Gernon's audible guzzling of one or two more draughts of the wine which he had praised ; and it was now so dark that the faces of the company became indistinct to one another.

CHAPTER XV.

JOHN SHARPE stayed away longer than he needed to have done, supposing the articles he went to fetch arranged to his hand, and his mind and heart willing to hasten back with them, or supposing no unexpected circumstances to have otherwise engaged him. At last his step was heard, however, in the hall ; light began to stream in through the half-open parlour-door, and he re-appeared, a candle in each hand, but with an expression of countenance very different from that expected of it, considering the humour in which he had gone to obey his master's commands. In fact, John's eyes danced gayly, and there was a sneering yet rejoicing smile on his lips, as, laying the candles on the table, he said to Gernon, "There, then, mother's jewel ! there they be for you ; and now see what good they 'll do ye : ugh, hu !" Pendergast was astonished.

But, still paying no attention to his irony, Gernon held up one of the lights in his right-hand, shaded his eyes with his left, and glanced, half-closing his eyes, to Father James's corner. The priest appeared turned faceward to the wall, his arms extended over his head, and his legs moving up and down, as if he deemed it possible to escape, by clambering upward, from the dreaded scrutiny of the man of power. It was to assume this position that he had been heard shuffling in the dark.

"What ! at your prayers, good sir ?" asked Gernon, smiling ; "repeating them out of book, eh ?" Father James could not restrain his groans ; "And you won't let me be sure, by a sight of your face, whether we are old friends or no ? Well, no matter : I think I remember your back ; stay as you are, if you like it, for the present.—Now, to enter on business in a regular method," continued Gernon ; and thereupon he slapped the candlestick heavily on the table, pushed away with both

hands the glasses and bottles near him, composed his face, hemmed, and slowly and gravely drew more than one piece of folded parchment from his pocket.

"Here they come, the terrible scraps of sheepskin," observed John Sharpe, chuckling; "and sure it's our ain poor sels that shake in our ain skins at the bare sight of 'em."

"Keep silence, sir, unless you have grown stark mad upon the instant," cried Pendergast.

"Well, and maybe I have; who knows? More unlikely things come to pass, your honour, so I will hold my peace; and why not, to be sure? Let nae one give interruption to Captain Gernon; not on ae earthly account; troth, jest."

"I find here," said Gernon, in a sonorous, even voice, "warrant from my brother the Guild-mayor of our city, to seize upon the well-limbed and sleek-coated hunting-horse of Master Patrick O'Burke, the same being interdicted to a Papist by Act of Parliament of the present reign of our pious deliverers King William and Queen Mary, and becoming my property by payment of five pounds to the nominal owner."

"Five pounds!" screamed Rory Laherty; "The O'Burke's own hunter! he worth five times more as much any fair-day!"

"Yes, I think he will fetch money," observed Gernon; "I liked his points passing well as your young master rode down the street this morning to our bull-baiting."

"Wirra-sthrew! wirra-sthrew!" lamented Rory.

"Keep your wild noises within your ain teeth, ye uncivilized creature," said John Sharpe, "and let him tell us a' about it;" and he laughed again, still confidently.

"In this warrant," resumed Gernon, "is a clause, empowering me to demand and obtain the sword which the said Patrick O'Burke wore into town the morning; as also the sporting-piece which he was seen carrying about Mr. Pendergast's grounds yesterday."

"You shall have them," said Patrick; "there is the first-mentioned;" he flung down his sword. "The second stands in a corner of the hall without."

"Thanks, master, I have seen it;" John Sharpe again laughed, but said nothing.

"I told you, I believe," whispered Lady Dorcas to her disarmed knight. Patrick smiled, and glanced towards a second door almost opposite to that by which Gernon had entered, ere he answered, "He gets it quietly, indeed;" and he and the lady continued to converse in a low tone together.

"I find here a farther clause to secure and carry away the

piece which Rory Laherty, called gamekeeper to Miles Pendergast, Esq., also appeared abroad with, yesterday," continued Gernon.

" You shall have that too for the seeking," replied Patrick, raising his hands to still Rory's cries ; " 'tis in his hut in the wood."

" Yes ; let him send for it," sneered John Sharpe.

" Go, Tom, and order one of the men from the hall-door to secure it," commanded Gernon ; and Tom withdrew accordingly.

" To be sure ; go, Tom ; and why not ?" continued Sharpe.

Pendergast could not at all surmise the nature of the seemingly ill-timed levity of his steward : Patrick, however, whispered to Lady Dorcas—" The old man's embassy for the lights has, I believe, initiated him."

" Rory Laherty showed a pistol in bull-ring to-day, I will farther thank him for that ;" Gernon went on.

" Lay it on the table, Rory ; I know it is about you," said Patrick ; and with continued laments, Rory obeyed.

" Yes—there—lay it on the table, Rory," echoed Sharpe.

" And, to have done with Rory Laherty—" Gernon now referred to a sealed letter, which he handed to Pendergast—" by reading this, written to your honour by my brother the Civil Mayor of our good town, you can aid me in my duties of the night."

" You are no longer my gamekeeper, Rory," said Pendergast, after perusing the official note ; " for here his Worship assuredly reminds me, that by an early statute of the present reign, your religion incapacitates you from holding the situation, either in my service or in that of any other person."

" The twa-horned deevil !" ejaculated John Sharpe, in generous surprise and wrath at the manifestation of this new legal point, of which he had been ignorant—" The twa-horned deevil and his mither !—does your honour speak the real law in that matter ?" cries of downright anguish meantime escaped Rory.

Mr. Pendergast assured his steward that there was no doubt of the law of the case, and John's visage now assumed a grim disapprobation, and a thoughtfulness, as if he seriously debated within himself the question of religious apostacy which he had mooted, in a fit of passion, at the bull-ring.

Gernon, unmoved in the orderly discharge of his business by any thing done or said around him, proceeded to examine a second piece of parchment, and called out, not raising his

head—"Answer to your name, if so you hear me call upon you—Philip Walshe, Baron of Crana!"

"Here, man!" and the young Baron turned spiritedly towards his challenger, in surprise, although he had expected some inconvenience from Gernon's visit long before the bully appeared.

"Your sword, please your Baron's Worship."

"I wear none, fellow: that near your feet *was* mine, however."

"Pick it up, Willy; 'tis worth the trouble, if I may judge from the glittering of the handle—does your nobleness carry any concealed weapons?"

"By mine honour, no sir," answered Philip Walshe.

"And your honour is to be our certainty? um!—well, let it pass current this turn. Your honour's servants—who will answer for them?"

"I will, as well as for myself: no servant of mine has carried arms, openly or concealed, since the Limerick Treaty, which denied to them—and ratified to me, and such as me—the use of sword, gun, or pistol, to guard against the outrage of common ruffians."

"Well; I credit you in this point too, Baron of Crana; and the more especially as the men are in the house, and can be requested to answer for themselves.—Another question, I pray you. There is a lady travelling with you, called Mistress Louise Danville?"

The young foreigner started into much energy at these words, and emphatically answering "Yes!" she advanced a step to the table.

"A very small and curious poniard, or dagger, was observed to fall from your bosom at the door of the King's Arms, as you dismounted from your jennet this morning, Mistress," pursued Gernon.

"Well? well?" she demanded in almost breathless haste, while her hand was plunged into the upper folds of her dress.

"You will not surely deprive the young gentlewoman of that bauble?" remonstrated Philip of Crana;—"It was her father's—her dead father's—the last relic of him she has been able to obtain, and she but carries it on her person to keep it safe during our rapid journey."

Her eyes thanked her advocate most eloquently; and then fixing a look on Gernon, she said, in a low, deep, firm voice—"With life, I will never part with the little weapon!"

"I pray you, good fellow, let us ransom that, at the least,"

resumed Philip Walshe, advancing and laying money on the table.

"Yes ; there !" added Louise, while she flung a purse after her protector's offering.

"Well ; I am never averse to be civil," growled Gernon, removing the gold ; "and so the poor little French gentlewoman may keep her father's plaything."

Mistress Louise retired close to her friends, smiling proudly, but her eyes were moist.

"To continue our weary task, Baron—(I pray Heaven it may ever end!)—there are the handsome horses belonging to you and the two ladies—your followers may keep their road-hacks for me ; they are worth little more than the unmeaning five pounds a-head decreed by the law to be paid for all horses taken from Papists, if, indeed, they are worth so much ; and I see little loyalty in losing money by any matter of business—but, as I observed, the three pretty jennets ?"

"Oh, they too may be ransomed, Mr. Mayor," pleaded the Baron, now half-laughingly.

"No, no, they must needs pass before other eyes than mine—eyes which have taken a fancy to them perhaps ; so your Honourable Baronship may as much as count them gone from you, henceforth to be engaged in ambling under more loyal loins than we can reckon your's, or even those of the gracious gentlewoman at your side.—And now, let us see : when you and Master Patrick O'Burke are after settling with their pious Majesties, King William and Queen Mary, for the amount of Sundays upon which you have not repaired to some church of the religion by law established, to join in public worship, since the passing of the Act obliging all good subjects to do the same—why, when both are after making some such settlement, I deem I shall be empowered to declare myself disengaged from you and him."

Philip Walshe laughed aloud at this new and by him quite unexpected demand on the part of the illustrious sovereigns whose subject he was. He knew, however, of the law under authority of which it was made, and therefore only demanded of Gernon, half-ironically, half-jestingly, how he proposed to assess the amount of the fine ; adding "I think, honest John, we must needs lump it, directed by two virtuous umpires, one of your choosing, one of mine."

"By no means, Baron of Crana," replied Gernon, "as you shall see. Answer me, first, how often in your life have you

been at public worship in a church of the established form?"

"Never, credit me, good fellow."

"I do; and I warrant your two ladies will make a like answer."

"Be assured they will, Mr. Bull-necked—Bull-ring Major, I mean."

"Oh, never heed the slip of the tongue, your Noble Worship, it harms not John Gernon." He smiled in a way that imported it might harm some one else.—"As to Master O'Burke and his old follower, Laherty, I think I may answer for them myself, from my own knowledge and observation."

"You may indeed, John Gernon," said Patrick.

"Doubtless. Thus, then, stands our account so far. The law obliging all good men and women to repair to church every sabbath-day has been enacted nearly seven years; call it six years, for indulgence sake. Since neither you, Baron, nor your ladies, nor your worthy young crony, and the man that was Mr. Pendergast's gamekeeper, have ever been at church in your lives, you cannot well have been there during the lapse of these six years. The fine for each weekly omission, for each defaulter, is twelve-pence. We count fifty-two weeks in each year, which makes fifty-two shillings, one year's neglect of the statute, incurred by said defaulter. Six years' neglect is six times that sum—to wit, three hundred and twelve shillings, or fifteen pounds twelve shillings"—John recurred to a slip of paper on which his calculations had been ready made—"now due to their gracious and pious Majesties at the hands of each law-breaker who at present hears me; and I am heard and understood by five such, and so five times the fifteen pounds twelve are, in even numbers, seventy-eight pounds; which seventy-eight pounds I claim to have paid unto me forthwith, or by virtue of this warrant," producing yet another piece of parchment, "it will become my duty to arrest said five defaulters in the King's name, and convey them to his Majesty's prison in our good town, there to abide till it is paid, and all legal expenses, such as costs of warrant, gaol fees, bailiff's fees, and so forth, discharged at same time.—And now, Miles Pendergast," continued Gernon, throwing aside the mask of assumed moderation, and thumping the table as he started up "you wished me, in bull-ring to-day, to proceed with your friends according to proper authority and warrant—will these do, sir?—will these do?" huddling his legal instruments together. "Look at them, sir—look at them, and tell me!"

"I do not dispute their efficacy, John," answered Pendergast, glancing over them ; "but, good John—"

"Good John!—Good hocus-pocus-and-my-nose-in-a-fiddle-case, and the-wind-blew-off-my-hat!" scoffed Gernon, snapping his fingers, as he used one of the select pieces of slang then in vogue among his "bachelor boys."—"Seventy-eight pounds good and current coin of their blessed Majesties' realm—that's the talk! No flour-de-louce, nor no base doubloons among it! Set the money on the table before my eyes in less than ten minutes, or to our good stone gaol your Papist cronies go, Master Miles! Ten minutes, I say, for I am tired of their evil company, and sick of the rincings of your bad claret! Meantime, let us be assured that our business is quite sped in your house.—Where is that poor relation of yours, Mr. James, sir? Oh, yonder, still at his devotions. Will he not turn to us a moment, even yet?"

Pendergast abandoned all other considerations rapidly to rejoin the bewildered clergyman, and once more put him on his guard, and urge him to rally his utmost prudence and self-command to meet the coming test.—"Turn, Mr. James, turn, good sir," he began aloud; then added in a whisper, "Turn, and be a man, or you are lost!" But his words only produced the effect of making the now nearly maniac Father James redouble his groans, and the up-and-down motion of his legs."

"I see the gentleman will not heed you, even for your whispering, Mr. Pendergast," observed Gernon; "so stand back, sir, and let me try my hand.—Good Mr. James, worthy Mr. James," he continued, now close to his abhorring victim, "what troubles you, sir? Here is nothing and nobody you should fear, for you are no concealed Papist, surely; you are no neglecter of lawful Sabbath worship. I pray you, show us your features, excellent Mr. James, if only to look approvingly on our evening's work. Do, sir, we pray you do." Gernon laid his hand gently on his shoulder once or twice. Father James at first cringed and shrunk under the touch, then suddenly dropped on his knees, with a sore, sore moan, and put his hands together in prayer, his face still turned close to the wall.—"What, sir! you force us to be downright with you, do you?—Here then, Maud! halloo, Maud!" and he bellowed horridly at Father James's ear, and clapped his hands, well knowing what cord he would jar, although Maud could scarce reply to his invocation with her usual promptness. Gernon's finesse had full effect. The clergyman gave one jump upon

his feet, another round to his tormenter, and stood upright and chattering before him.

"Now, Master Priest—now Master Jesuit, where is your breviary?" still bellowed Gernon, assuming his fiercest looks. "Would you know it if you saw it!" he continued, pulling it out of his pocket, and thrusting it into the priest's face.

"You have raised hand to God's minister—be accursed!" suddenly exclaimed Father James, in a tone as loud as Gernon's, and, under all the circumstances, more appalling than his; and to the increased consternation of all who heard and saw him, the lunatic, summoning his great hidden strength as he spoke these words, raised his own ponderous hand, and with a blow felled the Mayor of Bull-ring to the ground. The next instant, before any one, friend or foe, could stop him, he rushed across the apartment, and shrieking fearfully, hurled himself through the still open window, shattering its glass and frame.

The gentlemen cried out, and hastened to the window; the ladies screamed, joined them, and closed their uplifted hands in horror. Gernon scrambled to get up, commanding his two remaining men (for the person sent to order a comrade to Rory Laherty's hut had not returned) to pursue and seize the fugitive. They went out, and still he strove to arise; but it now appeared that, in addition to the stunning blow he received from the priest, his temple had sustained a severe wound as he fell, from the leg of the table, and after many efforts he again tumbled, dragging the table and all its glasses and bottles along with him. The confused crash caused the company at the window to face round; and once more, one of the ladies, Mistress Louise, screamed slightly, and Mr. Pendergast started. The second door of the apartment was wide open, a group of strange men stood in the darkness beyond it, and the tall and powerful figure of John Johnson, the farmer, was motionless over Gernon, watching him. That instant the eye of the prostrate man met his, and after but one glance of utter surprise, John made a spring upward, with the courage and fierceness of his own deceased Maud.

"It will not avail, Gernon," said the farmer, seizing him round the throat; "you are my prisoner, and necessitated to deliver me up your arms."

"That's *my* bugbear, Mr. Pendergast," whispered Patrick, pointing to Johnson.

"And here comes a dearee o' mine," said John Sharpe, as a man passed him from the hall. "I will not be preceesely bound to declare which of us this pet frightened awhile ago, in

some dark corner of the house," as a second entered.—" Ay, or this jewel,—or this ;" two others stepped cautiously by him.—" But yonder, doubtless, comes the poor Priest's hoofed deevil." One of those who stood in the dark, outside the second door of the apartment, entered. " And maybe, is seconded now by the leg, and its fellow, to boot, whilk startled a good year of her life out of Jenny, the maid of the chambers." In fact, without any ostentatious display or much noise, more than half-a-dozen of Johnson's followers unceremoniously took possession of the parlour, ranging themselves around that person. They showed no arms, and their features were as quiet as their proceedings. At the entry of each expected friend, John Sharpe laughed excessively—for him.

All this occurred in a few seconds, during which Johnson and the Captain of the Bachelor boys did not remain unemployed. The latter struggled desperately ; the former shook his captive as one would shake a boy, making his heavy accoutrements to rattle, and still saying—" Of no avail, man—surrender, without another word—I do not wish to do you present bodily injury, but surrender you shall, and must. What would you attempt ? your carabine lies harmless on the table —your sword lies there—" suddenly drawing it from its scabbard, flinging it aside, and then returning to John's throat the hand that had been employed in the process—" Come, come, Mayor, Captain, and guardian of bachelors, promise to be tractable, or we must make you be so—Blessed mother ! can you prove so foolish ?" shaking him more angrily and furiously than before, in return for a buffet aimed at his face—" Neighbours, rid me of him till I speak to the company : tie him, but do not hurt him."

" Tie me ! who dares it ? What neighbours ?" questioned Gernon, rolling his eyes around as the obedient men closed upon him :—" Who be these fellows ? where my own bachelors ?"

" Ye sent the last o' them you had waiting on ye, here, after the Priest, ye ken, hinny," answered Sharpe.

" Boys ! bachelor boys !" vociferated Gernon, now vainly struggling in the clutches of Johnson's friends, while Johnson himself stood free of him.

" They hear you, I little doubt," said the farmer, " but, be assured, cannot heed you. Every soul of them has been quietly secured, outside the house and in it, by this time."

" What ? questioned Sharpe, " even the pair lad sent by the Captain, for Rory's piece, to the hut-wood ?"

"Even him," answered Johnson, and Sharpe was still amused—"So now, Gernon, content you; and I say again, fear no present hurt from me—in truth, no hurt at any time from me; you are my prisoner, only that I may send you, well guarded, to a well-built jail, for high crimes committed against the laws of the land, man."

"What mean you?" demanded Gernon, turning his glaring eyes on Johnson, from the chair on which he now sat, bound with ropes.

"Yon shall know, if you do not already suspect," replied his captor;—Learn, for the time, however it may surprise your ear, that my only or chief business in repairing to-day to your bull-ring, from a good distance South, was to make you the King's prisoner; and let that information end all present discourse between us.

John Gernon withdrew his eyes to fix them on the floor, and an expression of perplexity and thoughtfulness settled on his face.

"Fair ladies and genteels," resumed Johnson, addressing the more important part of the company, "I, and my poor fellows, could not be without hearing whispered this man's intentions towards all of you, in your quiet house, at your good dinner this evening; and thereupon we thought, that while no place could better suit to make sure of him as our prisoner, we might also do ye a little service in the mean time: so, Mr. Miles Pendergast, a gentleman loved in every heart among us, will forgive our trespass upon his grounds in the twilight, as also our contriving to bestow ourselves, here and there under his roof, for the more securely effecting our good and lawful purposes. And now, before we go, attended by this John Gernon—for indeed we are in haste, as ye may conclude, and bound to be far beyond the interference of the framers of these warrants!—taking them up and tearing them—"ere daybreak —before we go, I say, I wish to show any farther little service in my power to Mr. Pendergast, his adopted child, Master Patrick O'Burke, and the other gentlemen and ladies, his seeming friends, although strangers to me; here lie two small-swords—which is your's, O'Burke's last son?"

Patrick pointed it out. "Take it back, then, from my hand, in token of my honour for the memory of your father, and of love for yourself:—and this must be your friend's—let him receive it from *your* hand.

"Hold, Patrick!" said Pendergast—"and you will excuse me, Mr. Johnson, since, as I can learn, such is your name.

The swords have been surrendered to the warrant of the law, and must not again be touched by us without a breach of the law. 'Tis afflicting, doubtless, to see gentlemen thus disarmed ; and had it happened upon Gernon's own violence, I myself would have resisted his endeavours at the time, and I would now encourage my friends to accept the weapons from you, and be thankful accordingly. But, as matters stand, we are bound to decline your courtesy, and submit to legal enactment.—Patrick, do not handle your sword—and you, my friend, I entreat you do not," to Philip Walshe.

Patrick bowed obediently, and the Baron shrugged his shoulders, and turned on his heel.

" Well ; I approve your caution, Mr. Pendergast," said Johnson, " and it has sense and foresight in it, for your own sake, as well as for those you exhort to proper submission to the law of the land. And I honour the law of the land as much as any man, the which let my proceedings of this evening witness. Wherefore the pretty swords may lie where I found them."

" Thanks," resumed Pendergast—" and I request of you to hear me furthermore. In making a prisoner of John Gernon, you act upon your own discretion, and doubtless well know what you are doing, Mr. Johnson. For us, we have naught to do in the matter—we dreamed not of hindering a deputy of the civil power in the discharge of his duties,—we offered him no hinderance—we gave, and we give you no aid or abetting, and we pray of you and of him to observe the same, now and hereafter."

" I promise faithfully for myself, Mr. Pendergast : as to my prisoner, he is scarce to be depended upon, either as a good witness in the time to come, or even as one whom it may be possible to command, after his commitment to goal at my hands.—But I think the matter may be surer for you. Bring in two of the bold bachelors," he continued, speaking in a loud tone, towards the hall ; and some of his own men accordingly led in the witnesses required : " Now, please to repeat your last words, Mr. Pendergast—" that gentleman did so—" Ye hear, ranting lads of single lives and of city courage, and ye will bear evidence to what ye hear, when ye get safe home again : and ye may add to Mr. Pendergast's disavowal, a word from me and from my tenants and helpers ;—we admit the not having received any aiding or abetting in this house ; we admit the not having asked it, either ; nay, we admit, that what we have done, and what we mean to do, has been, and is

and must be, in despite of the owner of the house, his friends, and servants, as much as in despite of your captain, of ye, and of your comrades—so take them out again ;” his new orders were obeyed—“ And now, Mr. Pendergast, and fair ladies and gentlemen, still I entreat to know if there remains no little matter in which I may do you a last service ?”

“ We thank you, no sir,” answered Pendergast.

“ We thank ye, yes, friend—asking his Honour’s pardon,” contradicted John Sharpe. He had gradually advanced from his position at the door-jamb to the spot where Gernon sat bound, and he now spoke from a chair of his own which he had occupied close before the prisoner. “ Hearkee, Johnny, pet,” he went on, resting his hands on his knees, and stooping forward till their noses almost touched ; “ ye won’t ride home wi’ the hansome small-swords, the even ; nor on the hansome hunter ; nor on ane of the pretty jennets ; no, nor wi’ the sporting pieces ; nor wi’ poor Rory’s little pistolet, dearee ; no you won’t himny ; but that’s not it ;—by your leave, Johnny —” he put his hand into the pocket of Gernon’s leathern breeches, and drew out, first, the purse which Mistress Louise had flung on the table ; and next, the handful of gold laid at Gernon’s elbow by Philip Walshe—“ See here, Mr. Johnson, sir —is your prisoner to keep this power of yallow money ?”

Johnson demanded an account of the circumstances under which it came into Gernon’s possession, and having heard Sharpe’s explanation, decided that he certainly was not entitled to retain it.

“ I thought as much, your father’s own rearing,” resumed Sharpe, grinning into Gernon’s face.

“ It goes back to its lawful owners,” said Johnson.

Mistress Louise, with haughty energy, and the young Baron with contemptuous indifference, declared their disinclination to repossess themselves of money which had been given for a certain purpose, and which had purchased its object.

“ It’s e’en gaun astray then for want of an owner,” chuckled John Sharpe, fingering the purse and the loose pieces, where he had appealingly set them down on the table.

“ Oh, no,” said Johnson, carelessly taking them up—“ If Gernon’s they are to be, no man but myself has a right to take care of them for him,” and he slipped the round sum into his pocket, while Sharpe lost his pleasant expression of face, and eyed the lawgiver studiously.

“ And thus my evening’s work is fairly done, and I am courteously free to make the most of the night that has closed

on us, and is to follow," continued Johnson, facing our friends in the action of one about to proffer a formal leave-taking.

"Ae moment more, friend," entreated Sharpe, somewhat recovering his recent abstraction—"I dinna find it in my heart to part wi' Johnnay one say unsaid; and here it is, Johnnny; the mass fines, dearee—the seventy-eight pounds, hinney,—that's not in your pocket, is it?"

"But it shall be, or in the pocket of any accredited person who demands it in the name of the authority which John Gernon cited in the levying it," said Mr. Pendergast,—"My visiters here assent to as much upon their own accounts. I promise to be accountable for the portions of the fine incurred by Patrick O'Burke and my late gamekeeper; and I notice you, once more, John Gernon, that in nothing do we, of our own accord, gainsay the word of the law."

"A good and loyal speech to close with, Mr. Pendergast," said Johnson;—"And yet," he continued, in a low voice, approaching his seemingly unwilling host, "although all this caution may screen yourself, to-morrow morning, I would counsel you not to leave a single Popish friend of yours to abide the questioning of our present and lately-past adventures under your honest roof, in the first light of that coming morning. You understand me, sir; so, enough. Our farewells come on at last.—Men, follow me with the prisoner.—Mr. Miles Pendergast, a good night."

"Before you go," interrupted Pendergast, "assist us in finding Mr. James, I pray you."

"He has already been looked after," answered Johnson, "but to no purpose; and, credit me, you are little likely to see him again on Northern ground, if his legs continue the good friends to him that, as I can hear, they were after his jump through the window. But again I recommend you, sir, to offer your present guests—(and I deem I may extend the warning to your sometime gamekeeper, and even your Protestant steward, so remarkable for his abetting of Papists to-night)—no beds under your hospitable protection; yet, do as you prefer."

"Horses for all, if needful, will be left in the stables?" asked Pendergast.

"Their own horses, sir—how can you question it? I speak of your adopted son and his friends; your two servants may also find themselves supplied. As for me and my neighbours, John Gernon's dismounted bachelors will yield him and me, and them, the means of a night ride southward."

"But those said men you speak of—how are they to be answered for?" still demanded Pendergast; and while he spoke, there was a doubtful and alarmed expression in his eye.

"Fear not that one will be missing," Johnson replied; "not a hair of a man's head has been hurt; you will only find them all tied neck and heels, at different distances from each other, in various holes and corners of your house and your grounds. Look for them, and cut their cords when it pleases you," he whispered; "though I do not believe it will be until after your friends are mounted and off.—And now, a third time, if not a fourth, farewell to this fair and noble company." He bowed all but gracefully: there was only a nameless something between his late and present manner and that of acknowledged gentility.—"Gernon, you will be close by me on the road."

"The road?" questioned Gernon—"if you think to give a face of truth to your words; and if, indeed, I have done ought to make me punishable by the laws of the land, why not carry me straight into the town, and deliver me over to the legal authorities thereof?"

"Suppose your offence not to have been committed within their jurisdiction, Gernon?" in his turn questioned Johnson; "and, farther, suppose your friends too many there, and mine too few; but, content you, I say, upon the word of an honest man, my conduct shall be lawfully decorous towards you in all things—even yourself, John, will not complain of it to your father-confessor—your chaplain I mean—while the crowd are gathered to see your last exhibition.—Carry him carefully between ye," he added, to his men, and walked out of the parlour.

His submissive attendants quickly executed his commands. Gernon was lifted out now unresisting, and with him and his bearers all the strangers left the apartment.

An involuntary pause and silence ensued between the company they quitted, who did not even consult each other's eyes, until a clatter and galloping of horses was heard outside the house, dying gradually away at a distance. Then Mr. Pendergast, flinging himself in a chair, cried, "Very, very strange!" Lady Dorcas looked smiling at Patrick; Rory Laherty's lamentations were distinctly uttered; and John Sharpe's chuckle, and the Baron of Crana's indifferent, and yet mocking laugh, responded to his impotent cries.

"And what's to be proceeded with now?" inquired Lady Dorcas.

"Why, I think, Paddy O'Burke must say yes to our invitation to the old castle, whether he will or no," said her brother.

"That must be it," agreed Pendergast, as if his own anxious thoughts had been spoken for him.

"And without waiting for the morning, as that strange fellow said," pursued the Baron.

"Assuredly; he and you, and even your ladies, Baron of Crana, must to horse upon the instant—alone, I manage matters as I can," said Pendergast,—“Patrick,”—he beckoned his hand to his protégé, walking to a desk in a remote quarter of the room—“we part suddenly, Patrick, after many years of living together; but I may see you soon, or hear from you—till when, take that.” He put a little bag of gold in Patrick’s hand—“and that,”—embracing him—“son of your father, I am your friend still.”

While, with broken and low words, Patrick fitly made answer to this parting address, a loud shout arose from Rory Laherty, who had squatted himself in Priest James’s corner, and he demanded was he to be left behind? Patrick’s assurances relieved him.

“I’s e’en gae also,” John Sharpe was heard to snuffle, “as Protestant protector and guardian to the lad, for ae journey, provided that his honour, my master, allows of the same.”

“Do so, John; you may chance, indeed, to be of use to the friendless boy; but I will reckon upon your speedy return to me with an account of his safe housing in Crana castle—and now let some of us to the stables?”

CHAPTER XVI.

THE dawn of the next morning saw all our friends, except Pendergast, a good distance from those of whom they had present cause to stand in some distrust. At a miserable village of poor fishers on the coast, they stopped to rest their horses and themselves, and were supplied with a breakfast of oaten cakes, milk, eggs, and smuggled brandy. Rory Laherty unwisely declaimed for an instant against the difficulty of making way through the staple bread of the Northern province, and placed it in contrast with the pliable potatoes and boiled beans of the South; but John Sharpe soon arrested his criti-

eism, calling him an uncivilized poor creature, who was not entitled to deliver an opinion on any such subject, and extolling the superiority of oaten cake over every species of food the South could produce.

Refreshed with a little sleep, as well as with their primitive meal, the travellers again betook themselves to their horses before noon. During the hard ride of the night, little conyeration had been interchanged between any of them ; the urgency of the flight, and the dreariness of the road, together operating to keep the whole of the party alnlost silent. Now, in the cheering beams of an unclouded though not fierce autumnal sun, and accompanied in their way by interesting scenery, sometimes sea or coast views, sometimes as seemingly inland as if they travelled through the middle of the kingdom, their spirits revived, and they discoursed freely.

Their friend John Johnson, and all connected with him which had come under their observation, was their chief topic ; and Philip of Crana and Lady Dorcas were particularly curious to learn still more of that person ; more, indeed, than it seemed at present possible they could learn from Patrick O'Burke, to whom they addressed their questions. Like his patron, Mr. Pendergast, he had never even heard of Johnson before his appearance at the bull-ring ; and of his charge against Gernon, or his real motive for making the guardian of bachelors a prisoner, and running away with him, Patrick could form no idea.

John Sharpe, riding close behind his betters, had not as yet offered an opinion on the subject, because, as it appeared, no one had consulted him. At last, in answer to an indifferent appeal from Patrick, he dryly and testily replied, " And how could John gi' a guess ?—an auld naething of a body, ye ken ; troth, jest ;" but, as it seemed that he *could* give a guess notwithstanding, or at least thought he could ; his ill humour was conciliated on all hands, and finally he gruffly condescended to instruct his hearers.

And very strange and vague insinuations he did hazard upon the matter, and in a very peculiar way did he commence the delivery of his oracles.

John Sharpe first asked Patrick if he had never heard whispered that John Gernon's pocket was seldom empty, although no one could tell how he contrived to fill it ? Having been answered in the affirmative, rather to save a lengthened proof of the fact than from any particular knowledge of it—for, in truth, Patrick's retired life left him few opportunities of

hearing much city gossip—Sharpe proposed a second question.

“ And maybe ye’ll never have heard either, that Johnny, the dearie, was in the practice of vanishing frae his bachelor boys ance or twice the year, and spending a week, or maybe a month, or maybe twa months, somewhere or other, apast their skill to find out ? ”

To this also, Patrick assented, upon the same grounds which had yielded his former admission.

“ Vera weel, then. Now, wha is the mon called John Johnson ? ” asked Sharpe.

“ Why, that’s the very thing we are all curious to know, good Mr. Steward,” said Lady Dorcas.

“ Belike, your leddyship. But, wi’ your leave, Master O’Burke will make answer til me this time also. Ye’ll be thinking he is ae bird o’ your ane flock, sir ? ”

“ What mean you, man ? ” questioned Patrick, in great surprise and a little anger.

“ Nae offence, nae offence til your ould het Irish bluid, Master Patrick ; but I mean a Papist.”

“ Oh, is that all ? To be sure, he is a Catholic—he must be ; witness his conduct before the market-cross.” In this opinion the Baron and his sister confidently concurred.

“ Well, maybe so ; and he is, just for peace sake, if so you and your friends, Master O’Burke, will have it til be ; for my ane sel, I make bould til say naething, only this—John Johnson is as much of a Papist the morn, or was yesterday, as John Sharpe is or was—the Lord shield him frae ony such falling off ! ” the speaker’s late angry notions of forsaking his old faith was obliterated by his more recent and still unsubdued testiness against what he had chosen to consider as neglect of him, on the part of his Catholic fellow-travellers.

Laughing slightly and tolerantly at the insinuation contained in his pious prayer, the party still pressed him to vouchsafe an explanation.

“ Oh, of a certainty, and to the best of my skill ; and why not, as in duty bound, at the will of the grandees, the world over.” Good humoured as had been their laugh, it did not add to his amiable mood. “ Master O’Burke, you rock o’ sense, I’ll be talking til you agin. There’s such people living as the Johnsons o’ the Fews, I believe.”

“ Yes, John ; I have heard of that courageous family,” answered Patrick.

“ And what of them, if it please you, sir ? ”

"Why, that they are the most daring pursuers and takers of Rapparees in all Ireland ; that they have already made prisoners of many of Randal Oge O'Hagan's gang ; and for some time have been hoot-foot from the North to the South, and back again, after Randal himself. The high price offered for his head (on his shoulders or off), by Government, being supposed to quicken their zeal and adventure."

"See there, then!" remarked Sharpe, and was silent.

Patrick entreated him to conclude, but he only smiled contemptuously, asking, "And ye canna mak' it out, a'tween ye, yet, grandees? ye canna jest tack that and that thegether? Uh, hu."

"Do you mean, John, that our friend is one of the noted thief-catching family?" continued Patrick.

"Maybe I don't; why should I? Little it becomes ane like me to mean onything."

"He assents," whispered Patrick to his friends. "Well, John, if such be the case, he must needs be a good Protestant, as all his race, root and branch, are."

"Believe it, believe it, hinny!"

"But why, then, pretend to be a Catholic yesterday, at the bull-ring?"

"Ask him, Master O'Burke."

"And more especially last night, at Pendergast Hall? for surely his proffer of our swords to the Baron of Crana and myself, with other things, could only be meant to show an interest in us, that might pass for the interest of a fellow-believer?"

"Ask him, ask him, I say til you again, sir;—do; and maybe he'd tell you; ane thing is certain, he can if so he likes;—ay, and anither thing is jest as certain—nae one can tell ye for him—nae leeving creature, unless a brother, or a cousin o' his, or his father, maybe. I am not gaun to attempt a satisfaction for your questions, Master O'Burke; it's a past my skill and schooling; natheless, I am content to think, that whatever a Johnson does upon one of his plans for trapping a Rapparee, may turn out to have a reason in it after a'—troth, jest;—they dinna pass for fules, nae mair than for men of low stature, or narrow shouthers, the whole kith and kin of them, thae Johnsons; but have as mony turns in their heads, and as mony shifts and expedients, as the born Rapparees they spend their lives in hunting down—ay, as Randal Oge O'Hagan his ain sel', though that's a big word in their praise."

John Sharpe certainly sketched with a faithful hand, in his

own style, the characters of the celebrated family of the Johnsons of the Fews, who indeed, about this time, formed themselves into a kind of self-elected police for apprehending Rapparees all over Ireland, but particularly in the North. They lived near Carlingford Bay, upon or close to the junction of three counties, those of Down, Armagh, and Louth, the latter a Leinster county ; and so were well situated for a sortie, at a short notice, in any direction of the country, against the flitting objects of their laudable hostility. Athletic, brave, and men of much mental shrewdness and cleverness, and withal a numerous clan, they were accounted public blessings in those times, when bad roads, and an imperfect system of civil jurisdiction, left the traveller at the mercy of numerous bands of such freebooters as they waged war against. Indeed, the Rapparees feared no other foes. Of the detachments of soldiers occasionally sent against them, under the control of a sheriff or of a magistrate, they made very little account ; but for the Johnsons of the Fews, whose knowledge of the country was equal to their own, and whose spirit of enterprise, sagacity in pursuit, and ingenuity in counter contrivances to effect an arrest, much resembled their own, the wild banditti entertained and admitted much honourable respect. It may be added, that the seemingly patriotic corps of thief-catchers found their account in this self-devotion in upholding the laws of the land ; for scarce a Rapparee's head but was worth money ; and, as Patrick O'Burke has intimated in the case of Randal Oge O'Hagan, upon the heads of the more daring of their chiefs, prices had been fixed to almost an enormous amount.

Patrick O'Burke continued his interrogatories to his attendant.

" So, John, having made a good case of identity in favour of our new acquaintance, at your own will and pleasure, let us pass to inquire into the nature of his displeasure against poor John Gernon. Beforehand, however, allow me a last question touching himself, namely ;—Is it only because his name is Johnson, that you set him down as one of the Fews-men ?"

" Maybe I have anither reason ; maybe no," answered Sharpe ; " who knows ?"

" If you have another, I pray you acquaint me with it."

" Oh, it will prove of nae importance, belike."

" No matter,—declare it."

" Why then, jest this, Master Patrick—he happened til tell me who he was his ain sel'."

" When—where, for Heaven's sake !"

"From ahint a door, in the lower regions of Pendergast Hall," answered Sharpe.

"And last night? as you remained out of the parlour in search of the lights?"

"Even sae, Master O'Burke; by the same token, a cousin of his was at his side when he gave me the whisper, jest to keep my tongue atween my teeth and mak' nae noise, but let him do his ain work, according to his ain liking."

"You surprise me now, in truth, John. Why I chanced on him myself, in another part of the house, and he gave me no such confidential explanation."

"You had too much sense for it, may be, Master Patrick; 'tis fules are put to roast eggs, ye ken."

"I must compliment you, John, on your own humility, and thank you for the sincerity of the flattery you address to me. That past, let us both try to comprehend fully the case before us. It grows into something terrible, I swear! Here, as I conclude, you would have a Johnson of the Fews making a prisoner of the poor Mayor of Bull-ring, just in the natural discharge of his usual vocation."

"Ah! aha! and ye'll be beginning to put things in a string will ye, Master O'Burke?"

"Why then, John Sharpe, the next thing to go in a string is his—Gernon is a Rapparee!"

"And the next after that, will be his ain sel' anent being found out for ane—troth, jest."

"Again I ask you, have you more than your own fancies for the opinion?

"Fancies, Master Patrick? I am ower ould to fill my head wi' fancies, I hope."

"Well, well—more than your own excellent judgment?"

"Yes, then; a wee bit more."

"Johnson's own assertion once again?"

"Or ae thing very like til it, I am thinking."

Patrick looked at his friends, and they at him, in much interest."

"And it's very unlikely," continued Sharpe, "that Johnson would tell me a lee for nae reason under the clouds, at that moment; more be token, canna ye bring til your mind, Master O'Burke, any support for his words out of the opening of our discourse on this matter?"

"No truly, John," answered Patrick, after a pause; for Sharpe's preparatory propositions had, indeed, passed but lightly over him.

"I was e'en guessing as much," said John.

"Let me try," volunteered Lady Dorcas; "First, Mr. Steward, you called on us to notice that John Gernon's purse used ever to be filled, no one could surmise how."

"That's like some o't, of a truth," agreed Sharpe.

"Second, that he was in the habit of disappearing from his native town for weeks and months at a time, no one could surmise whither."

"Richt—vera richt, your leddyship, nae matter where ye had your schooling," he continued, glancing disapprovingly at Patrick.

"And now I draw my conclusions from these two facts, and what you have since said—Gernon filled his purse by Torying it, in disguise, about our peaceable land, and was so employed during his absence, now and then, from before the eyes of his jolly bachelors—praise me, sir, if my reading is still right."

"I only mak' bould til say," he replied, "that I could pray to the Lord other folk had your leddyship's woman's wit.—And now, genteels, I have but ae word mair til throw in, and believe it wha likes; and til save idle questioning, I give notice that what I am gaun til deliver *is* my ain 'fancy,' if so it pleases ony o' my betters til use the word agin: whilk is as much as if I said that the discovery has been made in my ain noddle, and without help or hint frae John Johnson, or ae mon, woman, or bairn, on the face o' the 'arth; and now—answer me wha can—what have I in my mind til speak out, amang ye?"—and John Sharpe glanced from one to another of his hearers with an expression of in-felt sagacity, joined to his usual importance.

"I confess to you, John, I cannot imagine," said Patrick, in a grave, self-accusing manner.

"Nor I," echoed Philip Walshe.

"I do not answer till Master Sharpe gives us all one little chance for a guess," laughed Lady Dorcas; "Pray oblige us, sir—whatever you are going to say relates to John Gernon, does it?"

"Well; and it does," assented Sharpe, "and there now—I ge' ye a' that chance."

"Still I gain no ray of light," rejoined Patrick.

"Sows' ears and purses," muttered Sharpe, half loth to trust himself upon the proverb at length, but he thought it over, bitterly—"hard to mak' a purse out o' a sow's ear."

"Perhaps all honest John's warrants and what not, yester-evening, were but waste paper," surmised the Baron; "and but came to rob us of our swords and money, in a genteel way *à la* Randal Oge O'Hagan?"

" Better to say so much than to say naething at a', it shows, there's some warking in the brain-pan," answered John, again looking chidingly at Patrick, who it need scarce be added, enjoyed with his friends, John's election of himself into the office of Mentor of his master's adopted son—" Nathelss, ye have not shot near till the mark yet, Baron. The Leddy Dorcas will tell us her notion."

" John Gernon is somebody else!" suddenly exclaimed Lady Dorcas in assumed energy of manner, and indeed only speaking at random.

" My beauty you war! my pet you war!" responded Sharpe, in real excitement and delight, and surprised into some habitual phrases of familiarity, by his sincere admiration of the fair sibyl's superior intellect.

" John Gernon is—Randal Oge O'Hagan his own self!" she continued.

" His ain sel', by the pipe between my teeth," asseverated Sharpe, changing his manner into a solemnity suited to his subject, and his oath.

Lady Dorcas, infected by his earnest seriousness, also restrained her smiles and laughing raillery, and seemed afraid of the truth of her own jesting thought; and her brother and friend again glanced at each other, while again there was silence.

After a moment's consideration, however, Philip Walshe laughed incredulously, and pronounced the fact quite improbable, and Patrick agreed with him.

" Though you have given us a moment's fright, John," added the latter, " still I am inclined to apply to this new divination of your's, the word you allowed us to use, if deemed needful, when you should have said your say."

John was, however, positive in his own opinion, and supported it at some length, though in his usual grumbling style. In the first place, he wished his incredulous listeners to observe, that the person called Randal Oge O'Hagan had never been heard of in the North, or any where else, till within the last five or six years; and his first fame spread abroad at that time, just when Gernon was emerging from boyhood into manhood, and deprived, or depriving himself of all lawful and visible means of gaining a shilling. John Sharpe's next point was, that the freebooter never was known to be in the North, without its being also known that Gernon was absent on one of his mysterious excursions. He added, that immediately before the last bull-baiting, the feats of Randal Oge rung far and wide, in the vicinity of the town and country the travellers had just left, and

precisely at the same period of time, the Mayor of Bull-ring and guardian of bachelors was not to be seen among his old friends.

Patrick replied to this case of presumptive evidence, that, so far, Gernon's connexion with Randal Oge's gang might seem likely; but that he could be the outlaw himself, remained as improbable as ever. Many well-known personal characteristics of Randál, compared with all of those as well-known of Gernon, made the conjecture go for nothing. The one was talked of, even by the little children of the country, as a gay, light-mannered, gallant, and generous individual; the other's gayety went no farther than sottishness,—and of his surly, dogged manner, and of his claim to gallantry and generosity, the late adventures of the bull-ring and his visit to Pendergast Hall gave a satisfactory account. The very popular portrait of Randal Oge, limned by each tongue that spoke of him, had not a trait of Gernon's heavy features, short stature, and bandy legs; and the Captain of the Bachelors' company was even too young to pretend to identify with the flower of the Tories, and the king of romantic highwaymen.

John Sharpe met all this by asking one or two questions. What proof was there that the popular notions of Randal Oge's moral and personal attributes were true notions? Might not the idle gossip of the fire-side shape for itself an imaginary portrait of that celebrated hero? Might he not have taken measures himself to circulate erroneous ideas on the subject, in order to divert observation from the real features of his mind and person, that so he could pass unknown and undetected in the presence of individuals to whom he might have reasons not to become known?

"Very well argued, John," resumed Patrick; "Yet again hear me. The lips of even his sworn enemies—and those are not a few—have never accused Randal Oge of a blood-stained hand. If he cannot rob a traveller without certainty of a deadly struggle, he will not attack him at all. Now, God forgive me if I wrong Gernon, but I do not believe so nice a daintiness of human life is in his habits or his nature. 'Tis also certainly said of the bold Rapparee, if any thing is certainly said of him, that never has he plundered the poor man of his shilling. Nay, you do not forget his still more generous conduct to our poor neighbour Richard Langley?"

"What was it? tell it! tell it!" craved Lady Dorcas.

"Richard Langley," continued Patrick, "went to the fair with his own cow. She died on the road-side. A man came

up to him, while, doubtless, he cried over her some variation of ‘Drimendhoo, why did you die?’—and hearing his story, and his despairing avowals of not having now a hope or a prospect in the world, the stranger offered to lend him five pounds for a year. ‘ You must pay it back, Richard, the day and the hour,’ he said, ‘ and you must put it under this flat stone,’ pointing to one in the hedge ; and so he left him. Richard Langley, again growing prosperous on the use of the money, did repair to the same spot that day twelve months, and did leave five pounds under the flat stone. Scarcely had he turned his back to walk home, when the stranger jumped over the hedge, lifted up the money, called after him, and said,—‘ Stop, Richard Langley ; you are an honest man, and deserve a reward for your honesty. Here are the five pounds again, and five more along with them, not as a loan, but as a gift ; and if any one asks you whom you have seen here, tell them Randal Oge,’—and Randal was out of sight in an instant.”

“ Oh, how I do love you, Randal Oge !” said Lady Dorcas : “ and yes, yes, ’tis impossible that the dark-browed Gernon could ever do an action like it.”

“ So I say,” answered Patrick ; “ and to show as much, I made mention of the story.”

But no reasoning, no illustration could shake John Sharpe’s faith in the belief he had imposed upon himself. Randal Oge might have acted towards Richard Langley, as Richard declared he had done, merely for a purpose, and such a one as John had before explained to his company. If it had never appeared that Randal had shed blood, perhaps the wild and lonely hill-sides, could they speak, might tell another tale. And then the conversation of the travellers continued till towards evening, when some adventures of the road put John Sharpe in possession of stronger proofs of the soundness of his own judgment than his incredulous companions had deemed possible, and at the same time, led to circumstances which concerned the fate and fortunes of the whole party.

CHAPTER XVII.

FROM the moment he left Pendergast-hall, the Baron of Crana's straightest road to his own castle was the most directly southern one he could have taken. He preferred, however, an eastern course in the first instance, both because it would be less open to suspicion, in case of pursuit by the offended authorities, whose warrants had been disregarded under Mr. Pendergast's roof, and because, finding himself in the North, he was strongly disposed to make a visit to the Earl of Antrim, a friend of his deceased father, and who had been connected, like him, with the unsuccessful party in the late Civil war. And the proposed visit was not limited, in Philip Walshe's views, merely to a cultivation of the Earl's good-will ; in fact, he had some misgivings of the chances of a journey through a province distinguished for its zeal against all persons of his creed, and he felt inclined to approach, day by day, towards the residence of a friendly and powerful nobleman, who, in case of need, might promptly reply to an appeal for protection.

Hence our travellers have appeared moving Eastward, within view of the Northern coast of Ireland, upon the first day of their journey. Towards sunset, the road struck more inland, leading them to the town of Colerain, which they entered with some doubts of being allowed to pass quietly through it. Owing to John Sharpe's orthodox accent, however, and his making good use of it, in ordering, reprimanding, and controlling every body and every thing, they once more emerged into the open country without molestation, and even much the better of the larder, cookery, and wine-cellar of the inn at which they rested.

Some miles outside the town, the road divided, running, at the left-hand, close by the coast, and at the right, still continuing a little way inland. The travellers pursued their way to the right.

After proceeding a few miles farther, they saw four horsemen riding hard against them down a descent of the road, at a good distance. These persons did not wear military attire, yet the sinking sun flashed upon the scabbards of swords which hung from their hips. The attention of our party became fixed ; John Sharpe was the first to hint that he did not quite

like the aspect of the armed strangers, and, under all the circumstances, it was quickly decided that they should be avoided, if possible. True, exclusive of Lady Dorcas and Mistress Louise, the travellers were numerous enough to withstand a challenge from four horsemen, of whatever kind they might prove to be ; the Baron, Patrick, John Sharpe, Rory Laherty, and the Baron's two attendants, made up six good men ; but they had no weapons ; and, moreover, broils of every kind were best avoided when ladies were to be protected.

This determination was taken as all halted at the angle of a narrow and broken road to their left, in fact, the termination of the coast-road, now sweeping into the more inland one, which they had declined pursuing at its commencement, some miles outside Colerain. At present, however, it seemed very opportune for their purpose, and as the approaching riders became momentarily lost to view by a curve of the highway before them, they wheeled rapidly upon it, and put their horses to full speed.

It will be observed, that in consequence of this movement, they re-approached Colerain by a line nearly parallel to that which had led them from the town. The neglected state of the present narrow road, full of inequalities, and strewed with stones, did not long permit their horses to make rapid progress ; and John Sharpe often listened for the sounds of pursuit in their rear. No one appeared to be coming on from behind, and the fugitives slackened their reins, and, deeming that they had unnecessarily alarmed themselves, began to think of retracing their steps, and continuing their journey eastward. Still they slowly moved in an opposite direction, at an undecided pace.

Hitherto they had been winding to the coast from the inland road, between swells of land which shut out every other object, save the sky. Suddenly, the way grew steep, and making an angle in the middle of its descent, placed them before a scene so striking, that, with exclamations of surprise and pleasure, all stood still to contemplate it. To the right, at but a very little distance, the coast terminated in a gigantic mass of rock, falling almost perpendicularly into the waves, its summit more than a hundred feet above them. Upon this rock, covering nearly its whole extent, arose the ruins of an old castle, of which the rent and shivered gables and chimneys presented the most fantastic forms. Behind them spread the sea. Crossing their many pointed top-out-lines, like a vapour, ran a narrow

tongue of brownish land, in the middle distance. Above this, and much farther off—a fore-shortened expanse of water parting both—floated an irregularly conical hill, from the right-hand termination of which, flowed the horizontal line of the ocean. And down upon that line, the autumn sun was sinking in unclouded power, casting over it his radiance, till their remained but a golden dream of a division between the heavens and the waters; onward, across the washed waves, rolled his effluent splendour, heightened by the reflection of the sky, which he had already turned into glory; and against this dazzling glow, savagely started up the huge perpendicular rock and crowded fragments of the ancient castle, both in deepest shadow, except where fierce beams came bursting in through a window-hole, a rent, or a broken doorway,—the ragged outline of points and shatters, all cutting blackly and sharply against the sheet of living light.

"Yon's auld Dunluce," said John Sharpe, breaking silence, after the party had for some time regarded the scene,—"the chief castle of the ancient Irish M'Quillans, till ane o' the Scottish clan, M'Donald, took it frae them wi' the strong hand."

"The cunning hand, rather, John Sharpe," said Patrick O'Burke; and John's ancestral pride was rising, and an antiquarian and historical debate had like to have been the result between him and his ward, when matters more immediately important interfered to prevent it.

Down to the road, at the back of the travellers, swept a descent of crumbling soil and rock, scantily spotted with vegetation, from the summit of which they heard a sturdy shout; and, turning their eyes, they saw two of the horsemen, whom they had lately avoided, there standing still, but making signs to them to remain where they were, as if for a parley. Then the strangers looked behind, and again shouted; in a few moments were joined by their comrades; and, finally, the four riders plunged boldly towards the broken road, and gained it at a point between our friends and Colerain.

"They'll be a few o' Randal Oge's dearees," muttered John Sharpe, "and winna leave ane o' us a cross to bless oursels on."

The foremost horseman drew near, and gave his new acquaintances a manly, easy, and yet not cordial salutation. He was a powerful-bodied man, with strong but not ruffianly features, and he wore pistols in the rude belt, from which was ap-

pended the large trooper's sword at his hip. His horse seemed as powerful and as resolute as himself: his three companions and their steeds were models of both.

John Sharpe hastened to answer his salutation, and he did so in a style not a whit less off-hand and distant than that in which it had been given. Previous to his taking upon him the office of spokesman, he commanded all his friends to be silent and stand together, while he should strive to parley for them.

"Well, friend," resumed the stranger, "ye'll be on the road from the bull-baiting Westward yesterday, though your horse's head is not at present turned the straight way home."

"And if we were at the bull-baiting Westward yesterday, what then, friend?" demanded John Sharpe, in his turn.

"A civil question or two, and nothing more," answered his catechist, surveying observantly the group at his back.

"If that's a', speer awa', friend,—civeelity begets civeelity, ye ken."

"Thanks; but first a word nearer home: you and your company were bound Eastward awhile ago?"

"Maybe we were; Eastward, or Westward, or Northward, or Southward, or any other ward ye like, or rather that we like our ain sels, according til the fancy of free and loyal men and subjects, in a free land."

"Doubtless,—why did you all wheel off o' the main road, to lose time upon this by-way?"

"Why have ye—your ain sel' and the little dearees at your back—jest done the same thing, galloping down the hill, yon, like born deevils, to tak' up mair of our time, and spend your ain?" counter-questioned Sharpe.

"You are a cross-grained, cranky-headed old fellow, I'm thinking," said the stranger, with a smile.

"And suppose I am?" still demanded John Sharpe, looking sourer than before.

"Oh, nothing, as I have said, but the few civil questions touching the bull-baiting; for, assuredly, my cousins and I ought to be friends with you and your company, though we did not suppose so when you chose to avoid us upon the good road over the hill, yon."

"Follow your ain mind, mon; jest freends or foes, as you like it; but thaes questions anent the bull-baiting maun be put til us in the contrary way frae some ye have already asked, afore we call them ceevil, as you promised they should be."

"Well, I'll mind my tongue and my manners, to 'pleasure you, sir; and now, hoping that neither will give you new

offence, I pray you inform me if there was any talk of Randal Oge O'Hagan among the people at yesterday's sport?"

John Sharpe fixed his angular, red-edged, scowling little gray eyes on the man, as he replied—"Nae word—but there *was* some talk of ae freend o' his—freend, the wrong way—ye ken wha and what I mean, hinny."

"You mean a Johnson, do you?"

"Troth, jest—every inch o' a Johnson."

"He appeared at Bull-ring?"

"You may say that, dearee; aye, and mak' your ain o' it; and ye can throw a guess at my mind again, I' thinking."

"Did you chance to hear his Christian name?"

"Maybe not; maybe it isn't—John!"

"You must be right then, by the Fews and the clouds over it!—Boys!" turning eagerly to his companions, "here are tiddings of John. He *did* take the scent we supposed he would. This honest gentleman reports his appearance at the bull-baiting.—Thanks, friends, thanks; and let us now hope you can add to your good news, by informing us of his road, after the day's game?"

John Sharpe's suspicions of having to deal with a detachment of Randal Oge's gang were at once overthrown by this seemingly natural frankness, which appeared to include almost a declaration of the very different identity of the strangers.

"Why, the twa horned deevil?" he exclaimed, in growing glee; "ye'll not turn out til be John's brothers and cousins in guid earnest, will ye?"

"To a stanch loyal party, like you and your company, the truth need not be denied—we are Fews-men, every mother's son of us; and more than that, here, so far North, hot after Master Randal Oge O'Hagan, who has but lately slipped through our fingers in the South, and as we can learn on good authority, is now abroad among your hills, though by stealth, as his gang is not at present strong, and he waits for reinforcements."

"I'll mak' a wager wi' you, mon," said John Sharpe, grinning in self-important delight, and stretching out his hand.

"With all my heart;" his proffered hand was accepted, and shaken till he winced.—"But touching what?"

"That he's *not* abroad amang our hills," answered Sharpe.

"He—who? Randal Oge O'Hagan?"

"Troth, jest—Randal Oge O'Hagan, the pet."

"No' where then? I repeat that my information is of good authority."

"And sae let it have been, but 'tis a thing gone by. Ye had nae accounts o' Master Randal later than yesterdæy."

"There I agree—well?"

"Ane met wi' him yesterday at e'en."

"Ay! and that one my brother Jack?"

"Troth, and I'm e'en o' your mind;" and thereupon, John Sharpe gave a brief account of Gernon's having been taken prisoner in Pendergast's house—Gernon, who he would swear was Randal Oge—by the brother of his new friend. But while he spoke, every matter was cautiously and craftily suppressed which could disclose to the loyal Rapparee-hunters the religious creed of John's present companions of the road.—"And what 'll be your ain Christian name, dearee?" was the question with which he concluded his narrative.

"Pat," replied the man;—"and there's Daniel for you," pointing behind him, "and Isaac, and Ben—every boy a Johnson. But now, no time is to be lost in coming on John's track, and learning how true may be your information. If indeed he has Randal Oge in hand, I little wonder at his marching him a day's journey or so, before he would commit him, into some neighbourhood well acquainted with the Rapparee's doings—this very county of Antrim would, however, suffice; so Heaven only knows how near we may be to them. Once aga'in, before parting, can you guess the route they may have taken from Pendergast Hall?"

John Sharpe, after a reflective pause, answered that Gernon's captor had more than once spoken of starting upon a directly Southern course, and that therefore, in all probability, he had not entered the county of Antrim at all.

"The South road, then, will be along the banks of the Mourne, through Strabane, Clogher, and Monaghan, into Meath or Louth?" questioned Pat Johnson, turning round to his namesakes; they concurred in his opinion: and with renewed thanks to Sharpe, and a bow to his company, the four thief-catchers forthwith spurred their horses up the eminence by which they had descended to the road, and disappeared over it.

"No; I know naething—nae ane thing under the sky—how could I? Our John Johnson was not a Few's man—no, to be sure—how could he? And Johnny Gernon *is* Johnny Gernon, and nae body else. Oh, very well, and so be it, for peace sake, and amen." Such were Sharpe's self-praising ejaculations, as all watched the disappearance of the horsemen.

"The first fact is proved, I admit you, John," answered Patrick; "we await your proof of the second."

"Well, Master O'Burke, maybe it might come—who knows? Wait a wee bit."

"Though," continued Patrick, in his own mind, "even of that very first fact I can scarce help new doubts;" and he revolved this thought, in consequence of having seen, or of suspecting that he had seen, a face very like John Johnson's own peeping for an instant, during the latter part of the dialogue between Sharp and the police of the Fews, through one of the windows of the ruins of Dunluce Castle; and if he had been right in his conjecture, why should a brother of Pat Johnson, and a cousin at least of the three other Johnsons, conceal himself from his and their observation?

An explanation of his doubts was soon proposed to Patrick. While the Baron of Crana debated with John Sharpe the question of insuring good and near quarters from the coming night—the recent occurrences having put it out of the travellers' power now to gain the resting-point proposed upon leaving Colerain—a man appeared standing on one of the splintered pinnacles of the ruin, and making signs to attract their notice. The circumstance of his being opposed to the light behind him, as was the mass of building he overtopped, left his features less distinct, even at the distance he was from the spectators, than in another situation they would have been; moreover, the excessive glow of evening was now beginning to yield to the first tender shade of twilight; and yet, Patrick again believed he saw John Gernon's captor.

Having succeeded in fixing the attention of the travellers, the figure disappeared from its remarkable position, amid the lower intricacies of the ruin.

"And what must needs be, now? and wha the deevil was you?" questioned Sharpe. As he spoke, the same figure a second time became visible, from among a cluster of nearer ruins, which might be said to form almost the foreground of the picture already sketched; and as soon as he now showed himself, neither Patrick nor any of his friends made a question of who he was.

"Hasten from the road!" he cried, in an earnest, yet constrained voice, after glancing warily around him—"I saw the whole affair—you have been imposed upon, and are in danger from the return of those people—hasten, hasten, and you shall know more—dismount, and lead your horses towards me—I will meet ye yet a few steps farther—" and he jumped laugh-

ing and saying—"What a take-in! what barefaced raps!"—clear of the broken walls around him, and trod firmly up a green ascent which led to the level of the road.

In much astonishment, perplexity, but full of confidence, our travellers disposed themselves to comply with his directions. The gentlemen and their attendants quickly dismounted; then Lady Dorcas, and the silent, reserved, but most observant Mistress Louise, were assisted from their saddles; and all stepped from the unfenced road, the servants leading the horses, to present themselves for the promised explanation. John Sharpe's puzzled mutterings were audible.

"Ladies fair, and gentles, both, a second good evening," resumed John Johnson, bowing with an air—"but before we can speak farther, in safety, please to follow me." He turned round the way he had come, and, according to his invitation, was closely followed by our party, over much uneven ground, strewn with stones, and wild with tall weeds, into the nearer group of ruins, just alluded to: "and now, admire your situation first of all," he continued.

Between them and the great road upon which stood the remains of the castle of Dunluce, appeared a chasm of considerable depth, so that, with the sea girding its other sides, and this dry abyss cutting it off from the main land, the rock and its extensive ruins seemed completely isolated; and Lady Dorcas, remembering John Johnson's first manifestation of himself upon one of the points of the latter, exclaimed after a glance around her—"But you came to us from the castle! How?"

"As thus, Madam," he answered, moving from the place where he stood, and springing off terra-firma upon the top of a narrow wall, which, rudely arched underneath, formed the sole approach to the principal ruin, and which the visitors had not before perceived, in the increasing twilight. Across this perilous pathway he bounded, although not a young man, confidently and spiritedly, and, while Mistress Louise pressed her hands upon her eyes and shuddered, soon showed himself standing upon the edge of the rock of Dunluce.

"There is not the slightest danger, in reality," he said, again crossing to rejoin his friends, "upon any firm way just wide enough for the natural movements of the feet; if danger appear in such a situation, it comes from the fancy solely:—May I pray the fair company to observe another remarkable feature of my present castle of refuge?" he continued, now at their side pointing into the chasma beneath them: "the descent is not

difficult, even for ladies, and with the moon's help—she is rising abroad, over the sea, I reckon—will repay those who take pleasure in the wild scenery of Nature."

They were now at the side of the castle, opposite that which they had first seen from the road. The Baron, Patrick, Lady Dorcas, and her gloomy young friend, followed him down the stony and crumbling side of the chasm, and, with directions and example from him, gained its bottom. Here they stood nearly on a level with the sea, and perceived that either it or some volcanic convulsion, had perforated through and through the mass of rock upon which the castle stood, making a capacious cavern from the outward face of the huge natural bulwark, to its inland face, which at present confronted the spectators: and, glancing along the rudely-arched excavation, they could see the quiet waters of the ocean trembling and dimpling at a great distance, in the first rays of the moon, which, as premised by Johnson, was just rising above the horizon, and, as if fearfully, beginning to assume her reign of weak light, at the departure of the king of day.

"A' vera fine!" John Sharpe was heard to say, from the edge of the chasm over them, where he had sat down in no good-humour; "A' vera fine, nea doubt!"

His scoffing tones reminded his companions, indeed, that their admiration of the peculiar objects around them was ill-timed, and they made all speed to join him.

"Vera fine, thae beauties o' wild nature, doubtless," he continued, addressing himself to Johnson—"but if you have quite played your part of gallanty-showmon, freend, perhaps you will tell us why you beckoned us til come til you frae the roadside, and what you meant by saying we were imposed upon, and ta'en in, and the like."

"Willingly," answéred the person he spoke to. "I saw you in conversation with four men, who, from their demeanour towards you and your friends, and their riding off without plundering you or them, I am sure gave you false accounts of themselves and their calling."

"Why—did you not know them?" asked Patrick.

"The spokesman I did know, Master O'Burke, having once or twice seen him at a distance."

"And wha and what d' ye guess they said they were?" questioned Sharpe.

"Fews' men, I warrant," answered his friend, smiling.

"And are they not?" resumed Patrick.

"Heaven forbid!" cried the catechised person—"Heaven

forbid that the brave and manly blood of the clan of the Fews ran in the veins of such fellows!"

" Wha then will the dearees be?" said John Sharpe.

" Tut, who but Tories—galloping Rapparees, giving themselves false names to guard against your suspicions of their real characters, that so you might not be able to hint information of having met or seen them, if by chance you should fall in with some who are upon their track from the South."

" I guessed e'en as much at the first look o' them," resumed Sharpe, glancing about for approbation into the faces of his companions.

" Ay, John, but did not hold to your opinion," observed Philip Walshe ;—" no matter, now : let us endeavour to comprehend this puzzled matter to the utmost :—Strange," he went on, turning to Johnson, " that, being Rapparees, they departed without robbing us?"

" I noticed their leader counting your numbers, sir—excuse me if I omit giving you a proper title ; but I have ventured to inquire it of poor John Gernon, and, even in so little a matter, his ill-timed spite would not let him oblige me."

" The title you give me is a right good one, friend, and for the present contents me." In saying this, Philp Walshe looked at the circle around him, to signify that he wished to remain unknown to Johnson. " But of these Tories ; true they might have remarked our advantage in numbers, but must also have seen that we were unarmed."

" How could they tell what might be in your pockets or under your coats, sir ? And I can surmise other reasons for their forbearance : they were but a detachment from Randal Oge's band coming to his succour out of the South, I warrant : they knew well, closely he has been pressed here of late, by my brothers, my cousins, and myself ; they feared that a Johnson or two, or a score, might be within hearing of a pistol-shot ; and so, upon the same grounds that caused them to assume other people's names, they spared, for the time, the purses of you and your party, sir.—*You, gossip,*" turning to Shape, " you told them all you knew, I reckon ?" He laughed good-humouredly.

" Every word, and dinna begrudge them the good it will do them, the deevils—the spawn o' the father o' lees !" answered Sharpe.

" And what said they upon it ?"

" Pretended to rejoice at your luck, hinny—what else would they say or do ? Ay, and wanted til make believe that they were

all in a haste to follow ye, and greet ye on the road I tould them ye took, Southward."

"Or thought I took, rather.—And what road was that?" he demanded carelessly.

John Sharpe faithfully informed him, also quoting the name of the places through or by which, in succession, the horsemen had settled to ride in search of their brother John.

"Ay, indeed!" and so saying, Johnson turned his face to the ruins on the rock, and blew a clear but low whistle on his bent fore-finger. It was quickly answered by about a dozen of his men, who came springing to him across the top of the arched wall.

"Four of the Raps have just passed us, boys," he resumed, addressing them, "in pursuit of me, as they think, along the banks of the Mourne, into Meath or Louth. Jump on your horses' backs, and ride, ride, ride, till you come up with them, or cross them. I want the Tories here before morning." The men left him without a word.

"And thae lads will be Johnsons over again?" demanded Sharpe.

"True ones to the back-bone, Mr. Steward."

"I pray you explain to me, Mr. Johnson," rejoined the Baron of Crana, "why, knowing the four riders to be your natural foes, and part of the gang you and your excellent and numerous family are abroad in these wild places to capture—why you suffered them to pass your stronghold, here, without molestation or question?"

"There was more than one reason for my indulgence to them at that especial time, sir. In the first place, although the making them prisoners must have been a certainty, it could not be done without broil, and perhaps bloodshed; and I crave of you but a simple regard for my word of truth, when I declare that I disliked enacting such a scene before the eyes of your ladies, mayhap to their peril, or injury, even."

"A gallant reason, if nothing else," observed Philip Walshe.

"Secondly, sir, I make no doubt, although the outlaws passed unharmed by me, and even should never be pursued by a party of my relations then at my side, (a good fortune not in store for them, however,) that it was very unlikely they could escape to-morrow or the next day other divisions of our Fews'-men, who are busily asking after them over the country. But my best reason is untold. At our parting from our strong house at the Fews, those of our clan to whom command

was given over the rest, settled between themselves certain business for each to do, upon different roads here in the North. I know not, as yet, how four of my brothers, and many of my cousins, have speeded in their commissions ; but as for myself, my commission is accomplished, and was before daybreak this morning ; and hence I am entitled, even by agreement with all the Johnsons, to rest quietly for the present campaign, or until we meet again and devise other plans, although Randal Oge O'Hagan himself should invite me to measure swords with him."

"A thing he's in no condition til do the day, whatever may be his mind," remarked John Sharpe, fixing upon the speaker a knowing and confidential look.

"And well you may say so," replied the other, returning him his regard in nearly similar expression.

"By reason that your ain little business, as you told us, is done and well done, hinny," pursued Sharpe, allowing his features to relax into their grin of satisfaction,

"Again you speak the blessed truth, gossip," smiled Johnson, nodding his head.

"And whare does he rest at prasent?" demanded John Sharpe ; "ye'll ha' sent him til ae lodging-house built strong enow till your liking, pet?"

"Not yet ; and I am free to tell you why. I wished to commit him upon the very last robbery he has effected in this neighbourhood. To do so, it was necessary to become assured that the witness against him could be forthcoming, and willing as well as ready to appear before a judge and jury. I therefore sent, early to-day, to the poor man's house, requesting his attendance at this my good castle of Dunluce ; being absent elsewhere, he could not obey the summons till a few moments ere you appeared on the road ; and then, as you may infer, our proceedings were interrupted."

"Sae, *he* is e'en still in your safe guardianship, yon?" continued Sharpe, pointing to the rock.

"Be assured *he* is."

"Maybe I won't—well, no—why should I—I or any body else," glancing at his fellow-travellers. "Suppose it, natheless—suppose he is taken care of to this good hour, as you say.—Wha is *he*, hinny—wha is *he*?—tell us, jest."

"You call him John Gernon," replied Johnson.

"And you, pet, your ain sel—what may you mak' bould til ca' him?"

"John Gernon, too—and another name into the bargain."

"Oge O'Hagan?" demanded Patrick.

"Hout, tout—havers and nonsense!" first answered John Sharpe, ironically; "how could you think o' sich ae thing?" Johnson's answer was more to the point.

"You may hear the facts from other lips than mine, Master O'Burke. As I have told you, your appearance on the road abroad spoiled our solemn inquiry, in the noble court of the castle yonder; but accused and accuser still wait my pleasure there, and say but the word, and they shall be brought before you and your good friends, and the matter speedily ended by despatch of the prisoner to Coleraine gaol."

Patrick yielded a ready assent to an arrangement which proposed much gratification to his curiosity; and while John Sharpe rubbed his hands triumphantly, or often tapped the ashes in his pipe, Johnson again whistled towards the ruin.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A MAN started to the rock's verge, in answer to his signal. Johnson gave the necessary directions across the chasm in a loud voice. The man disappeared behind a shattered gable, but quickly was in view again, followed by others. All walked over the top of the narrow wall; and, side by side with a very simple-looking rustic, and attended by three of Johnson's people, John Gernon appeared before the present controller of his fate.

Our party sat on stones within an imperfect enclosure formed by the few ruins on the main land. Johnson stood upright at one side. It was now early night, and the moonshine alone afforded a view; and a greatly changed one, of all objects and persons around. The huge mass of rock and castle blackened, except where rugged edges of split and torn walls, of rude window-holes, or sharp pinnacles, just caught lines or dottings of white radiance. In this effect, it was more fearful than in the daylight it would have been, to see the figures summoned by Johnson's whistle come, like shadows, across the now invisible footway from the rock, as if threading the deep gloom of the gulf below. And when Patrick's eye rested on Gernon, it seemed, whether from the strong glare of moonlight upon his features, or from the working of his fears, or from the un-

disguised display of his long-hidden nature, that the bold guardian of bachelors had sunk into a very commonplace scoundrel, to be pronounced guilty upon the mere evidence of his countenance.

"We begin our examinations over again, here," said Johnson to the prisoner, "and here they shall be brought to a close, for the satisfaction of some old friends of yours, whom you may recognize if you look close at them, though I warrant you scarce thought of counting their faces upon your jury."

At these words, Gernon, suddenly raising his eyes, started, and then sent a slow scowl over the circle he confronted.

"Ye are there, mother's pet-bird," said Sharpe.

"Stand forward, witness," continued Johnson, speaking to the simple-looking countryman—"stand forward, and tell us your story."

The witness said he had been to the fair of Coleraine, a short time ago; had there sold a horse and a pig; was returning home with the money in the evening, when the man before him—pointing to Gernon—well mounted and armed, met him on a lonesome part of the road, and holding a pistol to his head, robbed him of his little wealth.

"Did he tell you who he was before ye parted," demanded Johnson.

The man answered yes; and that when he heard the name, it frightened him more than the pistol at his head; put to flight all notions of resistance, and flung him on his knees to sue for mercy; and the so much appalling name was Randal Oge O'Hagan.

From the earnest simplicity of the poor witness's voice and manner, it was impossible in the least to doubt his story; and, after he had done speaking, a pause ensued, only disturbed by a chuckle from John Sharpe, beyond all others he had lately given.

"You hear the accusation against you, John Gernon, Mayor of Bull-ring and guardian of bachelors, otherwise Randal Oge O'Hagan, levier of black-rent, and Captain-General of Tories," said Johnson, slowly and gravely. Gernon glanced up at him, pushing out his under lip, and smiling; but he made no other answer.

"Then you admit it as well as hear it," resumed Johnson; still John Gernon was silent.

"And will say nothing?" questioned his examiner.

"Nothing;" at last replied the accused.

"So be it, then—" and Johnson drew forth a sealed paper from his bosom.

"Nothing; only this—" resumed Gernon—"I'll turn your present child's play into something serious yet—for all that's come and gone."

"Hither, friend," continued Johnson, beckoning the man who had borne dangerous evidence against the fallen Mayor of Bull-ring: "by his hands you have lost the sales-money of your pig and your horse, and by your hands he shall be led to jail."

The countryman shrunk back a little, at this announcement, obviously indifferent to the honour and triumph of guiding the prisoner, alone, into the safe-keeping of the law.

"I say it shall be so, and must be so, friend," pursued Johnson: "what fear you? his hands are well secured behind his back; he carries no weapons; here is one for you—" giving a pistol; "and here is my committal of the highwayman, addressed to the jailer of Coleraine prison;" and he handed the sealed letter.

"Your committal?" muttered Gernon.

"Mine—and it will suffice. True, I am not in the commission of the peace, and such documents are generally written by a magistrate; yet fear nothing, John, or Randal, commander-in-chief of loyal Militia, or of outlawed Rapparees; that paper, and my charge to this poor man, will bestow you according to your deserts. So good-night, and march on, before your keeper. If he once turns or hesitates upon the road," he continued to the somewhat tranquillized peasant, "shoot him as you would a mad-dog—Off, sirs!" And with another baleful smile, and a chuck of his head sideways, Gernon quietly walked before the countryman on his way to the jail of Coleraine.

"Business being despatched, gentles, let us speak of your intentions for the night," resumed John Johnson, gallantly addressing his visitors.

Patrick O'Burke and the Baron of Crana said, that from ignorance of the road, they knew not where to seek a supper and a night's rest, at that advanced hour, unless they returned to Coleraine, which they were disinclined to do.

"No; you want more friends about you than you can meet there," observed Johnson: and he proposed that the travellers should remain where they were until morning, partake of such homely refreshments as he could supply them with, and then try for some sleep, upon hay and rushes to be furnished from

his stores in the old castle, together with heavy cloaks in which to wrap the ladies.

Under all the circumstances, his arrangements were approved of: Lady Dorcas, when appealed to, laughingly accepted them; John Sharpe recommending them out of a mere wish to cultivate the friendship of the accomplished thief-taker: and Philip Walshe and Patrick thinking them not to be refused, when it was considered that the Rapparees were abroad, and that on no road in the district could their fair charges be so well protected during the night, as in their present place of refuge wild and exposed as it was, under the redoubtable guardianship of John Johnson and his men of the Fews.

With remarkable despatch, their host, by the hands of his followers, laid a basket of cold venison, cold fowls, bread, and good wine, before our benighted travellers, sharing the cheer himself, and playing the master of the feast gayly, and almost gracefully. From time to time he handed slices of the viands and the bread, and cups of the wine to his clan, the whole of whom (remaining after those who had galloped after the four strange horsemen) seemed to be now gathered together in the shaded end of the unroofed banquet-hall—Johnson and his company sitting at the other end in the moonshine, eating and drinking heartily, and chatting and laughing merrily. The provisions were quickly disposed of—and, indeed, he seemed anxious to have the meal over; at a few words from him, the hay and rushes, and the warm cloaks he had promised, were conveyed in a trice over the arched way, by his followers; and when he had himself adroitly assisted in making couches for our friends, under the most sheltered sides of the ruined walls, he took up the last wine-flask, filled a horn from it, and standing in the middle of the enclosed space, said—“*The duch-a dhurris!*—good sleep, and good-night!—Follow me, boys!”—and turned away, not however, as if to regain the castle, but as if towards the road which ran by it.

“ You do not mean to ride quite away from us, surely?” asked Philip Walshe, in surprise, and much chagrin at the prospect of being deprived of the protection for the night upon which he and Patrick had so confidently reckoned.

“ It must needs be, sir,” he was answered—“ If Gernon, alias Randal Oge, meets a Rapparee on the road, his hands will not long remain tied behind his back, nor I undisturbed at Dunluce: from the four points of heaven he would collect his scattered outlaws—also falling in, perchance, with the four stout fellows who were near us a while ago, and whom my

cousins may miss ; then, bethink you, that owing to my present separation from my brothers and cousins in command, and the weakening of my own handful of relations, by despatching the scouts along the banks of the Mourne, I am in no condition to withstand the best that Randal can do ; so, praying your consideration of my reasons, and your kind excuses for my necessity, once more good-night and pleasant repose."

" But will you not think of our dangerous situation, exposed here, without arms, to violence from any comers ? " pleaded Philip Walshe.

" Rest with us some short time at the least, or wait for us to accompany you," urged Patrick.

" Stay, John, hinny," said Sharpe.

" Whisht ! " whispered Johnson, suddenly starting and listening at the breach which gave easiest egress from the ruin — " By the moon above us, I have stayed too long already, maybe ! "

" It will be unfriendly, or worse, to leave us now," continued the Baron.

" Hush, nonsense ! " still whispered Johnson, speaking in, to them—" Mother of Heaven ! what does the man mean, and horses on the road ? —ay, and at more than one point, I fear. —Take this—and this—and this"—he snatched pistols, carbines, and short swords from his men, and cast them towards our friends—" Now ye are not unarmed, and are tall enough to do for yourselves the same that I must do—Good-night ! good-night ! " and he disappeared, closely followed by his people all treading softly and cautiously, though quickly.

Here, then, were his hitherto well-treated guests abandoned by him in no very comfortable situation. If Rapparees indeed approached, in hopes of finding him in the castle, the consequences, considering the presence of the ladies, seemed by anticipation terrible. Alone, and now armed as they were, Philip Walshe and Patrick, with their attendants at their back, including the willing, the courageous, and the fierce John Sharpe, would have feared little. To cross over into the main ruin on the rock, and take up a position behind the old walls, covering any assailing foes through window-holes and crevices, promised safety, if not triumph. But it was out of the question that, in the uncertain light and shade of the moon, Lady Dorcas and her friend could be urged, or even permitted, were they willing, to venture over the rugged archway, upon which a single false step was destruction. Nothing, therefore, could

be resolved, but to await coolly and watchfully whatever events might ensue.

All remained silent after Johnson's departure, listening for the sounds of horses on the road, of which he had spoken, but they could hear none. They therefore hoped that he had been mistaken. Then they lent their ears to catch signals of his own galloping from the ruins ; still the gentle dashing of the sea below was the only noise which came to them through the silence of the night ; and now they made another surmise, and an uncomfortable one. If the thief-catcher and his clan could ride off so softly, stark Rapparees, of whose skill in all such matters they were but imitators, could advance with equal stealth ; and again our travellers remained in unpleasant suspense, only whispering now and then to each other.

Half an hour might have thus elapsed. Suddenly, the fair moonlight and the sleeping shadows around them were disturbed by faint flashes of red light, quickly succeeding each other, and then followed the sharp report of fire-arms, at a little distance, and at more than one point about the castle. Few conjectures seemed necessary upon this occurrence. The Rapparees had indeed surprised John Johnson in his retreat from Dunluce, and were now engaging him and his party, perhaps headed by the liberated Gernon. But many fervent though short prayers were put up for the success of the loyal Tory hunter, and for his speedy and triumphant return to his temporary fortress. It was remarkable, that old Rory Laherty, who hitherto, in Johnson's presence, at Pendergast Hall, or since their second meeting, seemed least in awe of that person, although his fixed eyes took a lively interest in whatever he said or did, now manifested excessive agitation at the prospect of his being discomfited, often uttering cries, and apostrophizing him in terms of pity and affection.

The shots grew more numerous and louder, and closed round the ruins of Dunluce. The galloping of horses also could be easily distinguished. Presently, mixed with the other sounds of hot engagement, groans arose from the road near at hand ; then a gurgling wild shout a little farther off, and then a rush of footsteps towards our friends. The next moment, many of those who had gone off with Johnson hurried through the shadows of the mainland ruin, across the chasm, to the rock ; and they had scarcely disappeared, when a man, in a full military uniform, more fashionable some fifteen years before than it then was, sprang after them, holding a carbine in his hand, and glancing fiercely over his shoulder. None of our friends

"Belike ; but you may hear it proved now. Has any man present seen this paper in the hands of the writer of it ?" he demanded, holding up what Philip Walshe knew, at a glance in the strong moonlight, to be the letter of committal, now open, which had been despatched along with Gernon to the gaoler of Coleraine ; and accordingly the Baron declared his recognition of the document.

"That's well ; you shall quickly have wherewith to read it by"—the man produced a scrap of a torch from his ample pockets, lighted it at some touch paper, which he kindled by a snap of his pistol, and in the ruddy glare, which strangely contracted with the surrounding radiance of the moon, Philip Walshe read the following words aloud :—

"To the Gaoler of Coleraine County Prison.

"We hereby commit to your safe keeping, until his Majesty's going Judge of Assize and a jury of the county shall decide upon his demerits, John Gernon, his body, for having, on the King's highway, under assumption of our honourable name, taken from the person of Simon Peters, by force of arms, and by putting him in dread and peril of his life, the sum of fourteen pounds three shillings and one penny sterling.

"Witness our hand, this twenty-fourth day September, one thousand seven hundred and four.

RANDAL OGE O'HAGAN,
Protector of the Rights and Properties of Benefactors
and Contributors, Chief Ranger of the Mountains,
Surveyor-General of the High Roads of Ireland, and
Lord Examiner of all Passengers."

An unusually alarming cry broke from old Rory Laberty at hearing this letter read. John Sharpe, still out of humour with every thing and every one, because with his own discernment and previous attempts at superior sagacity, said he would not believe a word of it. The Baron, Patrick, and the ladies, were less obstinate and incredulous, as several minute discrepancies in the character and explanations of the counterfeit John Johnson, although glossed over by his own plausibility, now occurred to their minds.

"All doubt can be removed on the matter," continued Pat Johnson, "and it may be necessary so to do, if only for the upholding of our authority ; let us see those we crossed on the road first to-night, on their way from this place," he continued, speaking through the breach of the ruined wall near him ; and

several others of his relations walked in with the countryman who had been sent to escort Gernon to jail, and with Gernon himself, still firmly bound. The former proved the identity of Randal Oge's letter of committal. The latter now no longer denied the fact of his having taken the price of Simon Peter's pig and horse, "only for a bit of sport," he said, under the name of the notorious outlaw.

Philip of Crana, greatly interested and excited, demanded what all the Johnsons next proposed to do. Pat answered, that they intended to let Randal Oge and his gang starve upon the insulated rock, watching them day and night for the purpose of ending their long warfare in that way, provided he would not quietly surrender.

"To attempt to cross over and fight him, and catch him, and tie him, were madness," continued Pat; "he and his boys would pick us down like curlews, one by one, as we walked over that perch, there."

"He may make a sally upon you," said Patrick.

"No fear of that; for just the same reason that we will not assault him in his holds, for in his passage hither we would have him under our carbines. I think, notwithstanding, that if one or two persons could win a fair and peaceable parley with Randal, he would not stay there to die the death of a dis-owned old horse, in a ditch; for, many and great as are his doings, there is a powerful family disposed to sue for merciful treatment of him."

"I pray you on what account?" demanded Philip Walshe.

Pat Johnson glanced at him recollectively, and with a tone and manner which betokened a disposition to be less communicative, upon a second thought, answered, that till he was more sure of the fair intentions of those he spoke with, he did not care to resolve any farther questions. John Sharpe's animadversions broke forth, but not heeding them, he added, that he had found the present company under very suspicious circumstances, lodged in Randal Oge's temporary house, and with Randal Oge's arms in their hands.

His spirit fully roused, his temper somewhat, and foreseeing that unless he could by some means fully satisfy the thief-catchers of the groundlessness of their suspicions, he and his sister and friends might be exposed to more disagreeable adventures of the road, Philip took a sudden fancy, and drawing Pat Johnson aside, said to him—You have not sufficient trust in the outlaw or his men to go across to the castle—you, or any of your clan—upon the parley you spoke of?"

Pat answered, "certainly not."

"Tell me the particulars, and I will go alone then," resumed the young Baron, "and perhaps that may satisfy you that neither I nor my friends are a Rapparee's cronies."

The man accordingly whispered to him the name of the family who were interested for Randal, and the reason of their interest, and Philip Walshe moved quickly to the arched wall. The instant his intentions were guessed by his fellow-travellers, they one and all cried out to him to forbear and stay where he was. His sister evinced most affectionate alarm; Mistress Louise impassioned earnestness; but the person who, for some unknown though strong reason, showed surpassing agitation was Rory Laherty. He screamed out, in his bad English, supplications, prayers to the Baron of Crana, the tendency of his words intimating that he thought the volunteer was about to attempt the capture of the Rapparee; he even added forewarnings and threats of something more terrible than bloodshed, likely to be the result of such a meeting between them; he fell on his knees, weeping, in wild entreaty: and finally, when the adventurer appeared gliding over the black chasm, his own figure touched with moonlight, Rory Laherty ran after him, and they disappeared among the ruins on the rock almost together.

Soon afterward, loud but indistinct exclamations, seemingly of consternation and affliction, were heard from the castle, by the listeners on the main land, and the tones were not those of Rory Laherty, although his wailings came shrilly too. Nearly an hour elapsed and Philip Walshe did not return. Vague but chilling fear, and a kind of horror, possessed the hearts of his anxious friends. At last two figures issued through a broken door-way, and slowly clambered down upon the insecure foot-way over the chasm. Midway, they were recognized to be the same persons who had gone over. The Baron of Crana approached his friends dejectedly and sorrowfully; his head hung on his breast, and he sobbed. Without noticing the expectant Johnsons, he advanced to his sister, saying—"Dorcas, your ear—" and before he could utter a whisper, he embraced her, weeping.

CHAPTER XIX.

LIKE a sister, tenderly and beautifully, Lady Dorcas, her own tears streaming fast, in her turn embraced and caressed the Baron of Crana, urging him to disclose the reason for his sudden agitation.

"Oh, Dorcas, dearest Dorcas," he answered in a low and cautious voice—"my only sister—my mother's only daughter—my only—yes—my only near of kin in the wide world—shame and beggary—Who stands so near?" interrupting himself, as Mistress Louise bent her head to listen—"oh, you, Mademoiselle—but I pray your pardon—this is private discourse between brother and sister."

"Baron!" said the young lady, drawing back in haughty surprise, as if some previous state of acquaintanceship between him and her had seemed to have entitled her to share his confidence, and as if she now resented his unexpected slight.

"Tut, tut," he retorted peevishly, "there is a time for fooling, and there is not."

"Fooling!" Patrick heard her repeat, in a suppressed but bitter and indignant tone—"and call you the past by a name like that?" she continued to herself—"dare you?"

Another person was nearer to Philip Walshe and his sister than Louise Danville had been during the few words of imperfected explanation which he had addressed to Lady Dorcas; it was John Gernon. From the moment that the strange cries had been heard across the chasm, that individual showed deep attention and watchfulness. When the Baron and Rory appeared returning to their friends, he stealthily shuffled, step by step, towards the place whither, as he seemed to conclude, the young nobleman would first repair; his present protectors, being on guard at the only points by which he could escape them, did not heed his movements in the general interest of the scene; and thus he contrived to stand behind a fragment of the ruin, directly at Lady Dorcas's back, while her brother and she embraced, and while they conversed, for they did converse. He also overheard the conversation between Philip Walshe and Mistress Louise, together with her subsequent mutterings to

herself ; and, it may here be added, he took especial notice of every sentence which caught his ear.

" Speak now, dear Philip," whispered Lady Dorcas, after Louise Danville had drawn back, and stood moodily apart—" no one can overhear you ;—yet no—be silent !" Casting an observant glance behind, her eyes encountered those of John Gernon, full of a deep and bad expression of interest and eager attention. Her brother, directed by her words and looks, now saw him too, and in much anger appealed to the Johnsons to remove him.

The men accordingly advanced, and led Gernon to the other end of the ruinous enclosure, exhorting him not to meddle farther in affairs which did not concern him, and reminding him that although Randal Oge's letter of committal was only a good joke, the testimony of Simon Peter was something more, and to be yet disposed of.

" But what in truth troubles you, sir ?" they continued, addressing the Baron—" We hope you have met no ill-treatment among the Raps, yon— ?"

" Not from Randal Oge," he answered, " nor, I am assured, with his consent ; but, to tell you the good truth, I narrowly escaped with life back to my friends here ; one of his fellows, after parting him, most treacherously attempted to stab me, and I know not how it was," he continued, hesitating—" but I believe the thought of the unprotected state in which a death so closely avoided would leave an only sister,—that, belike, put me off my guard when I re-approached this lady, and brought some foolish tears into my eyes :" while speaking, he had taken her hand, and now he kissed it.

" You have said a false say, whatever may be your true cause of trouble," again muttered Mistress Louise, who had walked far away from him and Lady Dorcas.

" He has ; and you are concerned in his cheating story," whispered John Gernon, near to whom she stood, without perceiving him. Louise Danville looked up at him with one of her remarkable glances, as if she would satisfy her awakened curiosity, by reading his very soul.

" We may speak of this again, Mistress," he added. She looked away from him, slightly nodded, and turned off.

" It does a body's heart good to see such brother's and sister's love," meantime said Pat Johnson, replying to the Baron's last speech ; " and not a Johnson of us but is glad you are again safe at the lady's side, sir,—But how sped your parley with Master Randal Oge ?"

"He consents to surrender two hours after daybreak," answered Philip Walshe, "and to submit himself to your disposal, that so you may make sure of the heavy fine awarded by the Government for the taking him, yet, he surrenders on your pledge of his being allowed free communication with the loyal and powerful family, of whose generous dispositions towards him you have yourself spoken, and of whose promise to remember a good service done to one of them—their head and chief, indeed—in France, he certainly entertains his own hopes."

"And well he may, sir," rejoined Pat Johnson: "the Cooteses, of Cootes-hill, are truly a family that can save his neck, if any in the realm of Ireland can."

Philip Walshe groaned, catching at Patrick O'Burke's arm, who now was at his side, and Patrick alone heard the suppressed sound.

"And, as you say, sir, upon Randal's report, doubtless, it was indeed the head of that family whom he stole from the French Jack-Ketch a year or two ago, when Sir Eyre Coote lay in a French jail, sentenced to die for happening to kill a French grandee in a duel; body and bones, in spite of French bars, and locks, and bolts, off bold Randal flew with him, the Monsieurs not able to guess how; and sure, sir, one good turn deserves another; and I do think that it will cost Sir Eyre his whole estate, and the King and Queen his good services, or he will save Randal Oge from the dance upon nothing which you know, sir, that he has been practising the steps for this many a good year, over almost all the roads in Ireland."

"Does he truly merit so well an ignominious end?" asked the young nobleman in a hollow voice, of which not a cadence resembled his usual gay and spirited tones: "I have heard from every tongue that his unhappy hands are clear of blood, and that the poor man's wife or children, nay, the poor man himself have never had cause to curse him."

"That is all true—more true than any one of the ballads sung to the tune of his own name," answered Johnson: "the rich of the land, and never the poor, have been his prey, to a certainty; the grand nobility, the well-kept bishops—(God bless their Right Reverendships! and I speak of them in all respect)—and now and then a richer man and woman than any of them—King William and Queen Mary, their blessed selves, no less; I mean of an odd time, when Randal has watched an honest tax-gatherer on his road, with a good round sum in his saddle-bags to Dublin, and managed to borrow it of him.—

But here lies the point, sir, notwithstanding. It's always more dangerous to make enemies of the rich than of the poor ; and Randal may bless the day he took the sting out of one of them, for that same reason."

"I agree," said Philip Walshe ; "and now we take our leave of you, as the day will soon break, I reckon :—Patrick, a word without."

" You are free to go, sir, and thanks for your aid in this matter ; for our own particular parts, sir, you will understand that we wish well to poor Randal ; neither spite nor malice is in our hearts against him ; only, let him put us in the way of demanding the handsome reward he is worth, and then luck and speed to the Cooteses and him, provided he turns good boy for the future, and mends his ways, and dies an honest man."

" Thanks to *you*, Johnson—" Philip Walshe shook the man's hand, to his great astonishment ; then checking himself—“farewell, I mean—come, O'Burke—where are our horses ?”

He was turning, leaning on Patrick's arm, to the outer space where the horses had been secured. His sister called him to her side, and when he had obeyed her summons, eagerly besought him to acquaint her with the real cause of his recent affliction.

He told her that she had already heard it in the explanation given to Johnson. She looked incredulous. He vehemently assured her she had.

" But your first words, Philip," she resumed.

" I know not what they were :—forget them you, dear Dorcas, however they might have sounded to your ear ;—I repeat, I know not how it was—I think I am no coward—some at my side in the field have said so—but that was indeed a very weak moment—let it now pass forever between us—do not speak to me of it again—it irks me, by making me ashamed of myself—so, adieu an instant—I want O'Burke's eye with mine to oversee our horses for the road"—and he left her, and again taking his young friend's arm, walked quickly with him out of the ruins.

" Patrick," he said, looking round to note if they were alone—" Patrick, good lad, I suppose your quick mind apprehends it ? I thought at first to disclose it to Dorcas ; but I was impetuous, and off my guard then—and 'tis better, much better to keep her ignorant for the present at the least—certainly for the present—but you must be my counsellor—and only you, excepting poor Rory Laherty, who, it appears, has had the secret buried in his faithful old heart ever since long before

your good father's death—you and old Rory, I say; and Patrick, as I premised, it has started across your thoughts, has it not?"

"Some loose and unshaped misgivings I have experienced, of a certainty, dear friend—but—that it could be true——"

"It *is* true, dear O'Burke"—he caught Patrick's hand and wrung it—"it is, and it has cut Philip Walshe's heart through and through at the roots—make allowance for my weakness, good fellow—but oh, Patrick, that unhappy man—brother—now first seen and known—the poor, lost, lost Roger."

"Baron of Crana,"—Patrick began, wishing to expostulate, and condole, and advise: his friend quickly interrupted him.

"Baron of Crana—who?—You address *me*, and I have now no such title, man. No, no! but look yonder. There, upon that rock—among those ruins—like himself and his name—begirt with the savage sea at one side, and with common thief-catchers at the other—there, a common thief—and the surrendered prisoner of those blood-money men—there, good boy, skulks the real and the last Baron of Crana!"

"Nay, nay," said Patrick, "do not let too gloomy a view of things overpower you, in your present great and natural grief. Why should he be the last Baron of Crana?—why should not the secret of the outlawed Roger being yet alive, remain as profound, although you and I have come to the knowledge of it, as it has done for some sixteen years? And, if so, must not you still be Baron of Crana, with an unattainted estate—ay, and your children, and their children after you?"

"It is not that—it is not that?" answered Philip Walshe; "it is not that, except in its application to poor Dorcas, which now most afflicts me—chokes me—God knows, it is not! But O'Burke, think of *him*, think of *him*!"

"I do, and pity him from my soul; and you as his brother. How did your meeting affect him?"

"Poor fellow! poor fellow! naturally and strongly, lovingly and terribly. O'Burke, it *was* a terrible moment. I stood before him suddenly, almost unknowing that the old man followed me. He, deeming me come upon a bad design against him, made at my throat; we struggled, for I resisted with all my strength; then came Laherty's shriek, and his low words—"Sons of the same father! Philip Walshe and Roger Walshe, do not spill each other's blood!"

"Terrible indeed," said Patrick, as the narrator paused, yielding to his emotions.

"When he heard the words, and had looked long enough

into the old servant's face to know him, he let me go, and fell backward till a wall propped him ; and his cries, O'Burke, then filled my ears and soul—ye must have caught them here. I pass over my own conduct on the occasion ; you will imagine it. The first moment of observation I could command, I looked towards him. There he still stood, supporting himself against the wall, one hand upon his eyes, as if he would press them inward, to turn the course of their tears. Soon after, he uncovered them, and fixed them on mine ; and then his look, and the expression of his whole face, was pitiable, miserable—heart-breaking, O'Burke. Love of me, and fear of not being held worthy of my love—a wish to embrace me and kiss me, and a doubt of being spurned—ay, O'Burke, 'tis horrid to say, but I read the feeling with one glance of my heart—all this worked his poor features."

" Well ?" asked Patrick, in a low, soft, and broken voice.

" Well ?—I—I ran to him, and embraced my brother," replied Philip Walshe ; the sobs and tears of the scene he described, returning at this vivid and recent recollection of it.

" And then, after some indulgence of your passion on both sides, ye spoke together," resumed Patrick, anxious, for his friend's sake, to ascertain how far this discovery might seem likely to affect his fortunes and those of his sister.

" Yes, yes ; but to little purpose. Nor if I had rested on that rock till morning, could either of us have interchanged a calm word. But I am to see him again—that is—oh, pity me in your heart, O'Burke !—that is, if ——"

" I know," said Patrick, as his friend struggled to express his meaning ; then wishing to lead Philip Walshe's mind to a less afflicting point of the subject, he went on—" And how came my father's servant to know of all this ?"

" Roger, as I have learned from Laherty and himself, escaped in secret to your father's house, after the Hillsborough affair, to recover of his bad wounds. While lying concealed there, he was outlawed in Meath. The tidings of the outlawry no sooner reached him than he fled to France, still secretly and disguised, resolved to abandon Ireland for ever. Some ill chance, I know not what as yet, drove him back to his own accursed country ; but during his hiding with the O'Burke, one servant of the house, and one only, was in his confidence—that one, Rory Laherty ; and hence the old man's recognition of him among us upon this unlucky journey, as well as at Pendergast-Hall, although, as he saw that perhaps years, suffering, and a changed mode of dress, together with

taking little notice of so humble a man, kept Roger from re-collecting him, old Rory, for my sake, and my sister's, and, he foolishly thought, for your's too, as our friend, would not give a hint as to who the Rapparee was, until, to save one brother from killing the other, he at last spoke out what he knew."

"And not so incautiously, I hope, as to make any of the wild people in the castle, at the same time, the wiser?"

"I believe, no; for, although his cries were loud, his words were lower, or drowned in them—but what does it matter?"

"Much; and you will agree with me to-morrow. Poor Roger himself—" Patrick paused.

"Well? well, O'Burke?" Philip Walshe looked up, as if he suspected the tendency of the delayed question.

"'Tis an irksome point, Baron, and I ask your excuses for touching upon it; but if I am to be your counsellor, it is also necessary that I should do so. Are you so assured of your poor brother's principles, hitherto unknown to you, and not practised in the best school, you know, of late, as to make certain that ——"

"That he will now keep the secret on which depends the saving of me and Dorcas from beggary? My life upon his honour and honesty, after all his trials and *nominal* offences against the laws!" answered Philip Walshe, with more of the brother in his feelings and words than of a dispassionate and disinterested man. "My life upon his honour and honesty, even though he could gain by a breach of either. But how could he gain by such a dishonour as you imagine, O'Burke? Think, and you will find you have not yet compassed the whole subject. He could only ruin Dorcas and me, by publicly proclaiming his present existence. He could not enjoy his father's lands himself—not a sod of them. Let him be shown alive, and they pass from him, as well as from me, for ever. Besides, and worst of all for him, let him live for a hundred years to come, and be discovered living at the end of that time, and he would die the death of a traitor and outlaw under the ban fixed upon him in Meath, even supposing him to escape all immediate perils of a death still more degrading to his memory and his family. No, no, I think not, I repeat, of losses in fortune to come from this event. His fate, Patrick, ~~his~~ uncertain—I should rather say all but certain fate—the yearnings towards a brother never before seen, though dearly loved upon report—of a brother deemed dead and changed into worms these sixteen years, now found a breathing man—and then so

found, O'Burke!—But hush! some one has been listening to us, behind yon large stone."

"I saw no one," answered Patrick, hastening to the place pointed out by Philip Walshe; "and no one is now here."

"I did not expect you should find any one now," replied his friend; "but I thought at that moment that a figure passed from behind the stone into the ruins, very indistinct in the shadow, and only caught by my side glance."

"It cannot have been so; let us rather say that your alarmed state of mind has deceived you."

"Be it so: but I will stay no longer in this place. Assuredly, O'Burke, not to witness the surrender of my poor brother into the hands of his vulgar and calculating hunters-down. Come, let us to the road, with what heart we may. In Crana Castle, if not before, you will counsel me as you can; and there, too, I must await farther tidings of poor Roger. He has promised that a man shall speed to me, every day, with information of his hopes and situation; the first rider to take the road after his communication with those great, and powerful, and loyal Cooteses. Come, my servants hold our horses, I see. Let us hide our true faces, and try to make poor Dorcas smile again."

CHAPTER XX.

IT was again the sunset. From the top of an eminence, over which clambered a main road, a spacious semicircular view of undulating hills and valleys, broke upon the eye. Through the lowest valley winded a clear inland river; beyond the highest hill shot up very distant blue mountains of a peaked and craggy outline; all the land within sight was either cultivated, or covered with venerable woods; and before one of those woods, which ascended a rising ground at its back, stood, in about the middle of the beautiful, though map-like scene, a castle of the Irish feudal times, many centuries old, but, at the date of this tale, still in complete preservation.

Its defensive works of circumvallation were numerous and formidable. Its outward ballium comprehending near an acre of ground, had a round tower at each angle, as also one at

either side of an embattled gateway, with a portcullis, which fronted the road over the hill that gave a first view of the building. Within this area, or outward court, was the body of the castle, enclosing an inner court, of an oblong form. From its centre, opposite to the entrance in the ballium, projected a massive quadrangular keep, of five stories; wings extending from its sides, to the right and to the left, terminated in round towers, with small round chimneys: at right-angles with these continued the main body of the edifice, running back, until united by a high embattled wall, ending in square towers, with tall, narrow, square chimneys, and many of them. In point of taste and uniformity, the entrance to the inner court might have been expected in the keep, opposite to that in the ballium, which led into the outer one; it was found, however, in another front, flanked by yet another round tower, and having a second portcullis. But altogether, the castle was one of the highest class of those built by the Lords of the Pale, perhaps about the fourteenth century, and had a character of strength and rude dignity, which called up the image of a martial and powerful chief of feudal days.

"Ah, old Crana!" said Philip Walshe, as, with all the friends last found in his company, he gained a first glance, from the summit of the steep road, of the whole scene described.

"Dear, dear Crana," sighed Lady Dorcas, smiles and tears in her eyes together.

"And you remember it, Dorcas?" asked her brother.

"Ay, better than many a scene of yesterday, although I was but a wild little child, as high as my own present knee, when ye sent me away from it."

"What are those low mounds of earth to the south, then? I will try your boasted memory."

"The bow-butts, to be sure, where the quarrelsome followers of our quarrelsome forefathers used to practise their archery. And nearer to the castle is the bowling-green; and close by the fish-pond, fed by the little stream from Lisnaliagh, or the townland of the leech, in former days, is your cruel cock-pit, Philip."

"The townland of the leech?" repeated O'Burke, "and had the physicians attending upon great families of old, their own allowance of land, named after them, upon the Baron's estate?"

"Such has been the case, at least at Crana, and upon other old estates which have come under my eye," answered Philip: "in fact, the seat of an ancient Baron, here in Southern Ire-

land, tried to imitate a royal court in all things, though upon an humble scale: and many other proofs of the fact are found in the names of other patches of land, now visible to us."

"The puir, puffed-up creatures," said John Sharpe.

"Yonder," continued Philip Walshe, "are fields called after the ancient master of the hawks, of the cantred,—Ballysealgrave; in the other direction, surrounding the clump of old oaks, you see Ballfiaguidhe, or the townland of the huntsman; and the more useful than ornamental swineherd had his portion—Knocknamuck—nearer to the castle."

"Do not forget the merry tailor's little settlement,—Foiltailleur—running towards us, along the banks of that dear little shining stream, from Gortnaceap, or the field of stumps," added Lady Dorcas.

During this conversation, Philip Walshe endeavoured to assume in his sister's presence his usual lightsome tones and manner. He had done so since their departure from Dunluce, many days before, and, it seemed, with sufficient effect to lull her suspicions of a more particular cause for his agitation, after meeting his outlaw brother, than that which he had chosen to yield her. Her own sparkling spirits had not fully returned, however; though when he questioned and rallied her upon her very unusual tendency to look grave and say little, she assured him she was not aware of what he attributed to her; or if now and then a shade did steal over her mind, it came she knew not how or wherefore. Patrick O'Burke was the most downcast of the party: and for several reasons. Philip Walshe's present situation took full hold of his mind, as much, perhaps more, on his sister's account than on his own, for Patrick began to struggle with unbidden sighs whenever he looked upon that very fascinating lady, and to redden and seem off his guard when she spoke to him. Then, he could not avoid feeling deeply and keenly that he was about to seek a second refuge under a second roof, which was not his own; and in fact, all his future prospects presented a confused, a gloomy, and an irritating subject of contemplation, particularly when viewed under the influence of the new sensations beginning to possess his bosom. As to Rory Laherty and John Sharpe—the former was all ecstasy at his return to the South—(although far from his old home, it was the South still) and he spoke Irish as fluently as gushes a long pent-up river, to almost every person he met on the road; and the latter grew proportionately sour and critical, after having passed the borders of Ulster; found fault where it was not to be found, as well as where it was;

called the pure old Celtic tongue, or the purest remains of it then extant, a manner of speech not becoming pigs ; and was snappish with his old friend Rory, if appealed to upon the excellency of any thing or object around him.

To the manner of tillage of the Southern province, to the dress of the people, to their breed of cattle, even of dogs, he had something to say. Nay, while all his fellow-travellers admired the rich as well as extensive amphitheatre of cultivated hill and valley, or of majestic woods around the castle of Crana, he depreciated the soil, the crops, the trees ; in fact, cried out that “all was barren.” And of the castle itself, his notice was peculiar. He could not understand, he said, the use or purpose of so much old stone and mortar, in a residence for a few quiet Christian people, or, at least, a few who ought to be quiet and Christian, though he left all that to themselves ; and then the senseless “wheerlegigs,” or windmills, at the corners, and by the gate, and the big fool of a square thing in the front, and all the pretences for windows, and the make-believes for chimneys ; for he would warrant that the one-half of them had never been warmed by a puff of smoke, of as much consideration as warmed his nose at that moment—indeed the whole old barrack of a place—(castle, forsooth !)—looked very little like an abode that had often smelt of venison, or good ox, “ae half hour afore the hour o’ dinner—troth, jest ;” and, in conclusion, he pitied the extravagant, pretending, and poor pride of Southern Papists, and asked—(he was thinking of Pendergast-hall)—why could they not build solid, well-shaped, square, sensible houses, of comfortable-looking brick, three stories high ?

It has been said that O’Burke was the most downcast of the party ; but he was not the most reserved. Since her few words of misunderstanding with Philip Walshe at Dunluce, Louise Danville scarce opened her lips to any of her companions, and she took little pains to hide the positive, and, seemingly unmeasured displeasure which settled upon her countenance : indeed, one of the remarkable characteristics of this young person was, the almost total want of the worldly experience which teaches to veil or suppress vehement feelings of any kind. Lady Dorcas had made many attempts to conciliate her, without alluding to the past, but ineffectually ; her friend remained distant, silent, and all but uncivil. Philip Walshe himself appeared willing to make up the quarrel upon which was founded her unlovely mood. He rode at her side, leaving his sister in charge of Patrick, and even attempted some little sallies, and a renewal of the personal flattery which had marked his pre-

vious conversation with her ; the one much opposed to his present real state of feeling, the other as unmeaning as they had ever been. But she reined up her jennet when he too closely approached her, and paused for him to move forward ; his witticisms did not extract a smile, and his silly compliments only caused her to shake her head, or to frown, or to assume a scoffing and bitter expression of mouth. Once or twice, indeed, tears which she did not permit him to see, filled her downcast eyes, or she flashed at him a still secret glance of mixed reproach, tenderness, and impatient indignation. Patrick occasionally caught some of this by-play, and wondered at the primitive strength of her character, as well as at the nature of the connexion existing between her and his friends. He was soon to see both more fully explained.

A month had passed over in Crana castle, and he had explored all the interesting walks and scenery lying immediately about it ; silent valleys, watered each by its own little streamlet ; the fragrant path along the side of the glassy river ; trackless woods, shaded and tangled, like his own mind, and mournfully and yet sublimely echoing to the raven's croak, or the wild pigeon's coo ; and more open realms of leafy solitude, where the partially whitened trunks of gigantic and aged beeches stood often wide asunder, allowing glad views, up hill or down dell, still of trees and trees, with fresh spots of green grass between, to so great a distance that sometimes the eye wavered over a vague, airy blue tint, in which stems and branches, and the medium-dimmed light of the dancing sunbeams, became one confused vision of shapes and colour. Here and there deer grazed, near him and far off, or rushed in a herd, upon some wayward impulse, down into the bottom of a thickly planted valley, or engaged each other in combat, making the lonely shades around ring to the martial clattering of their antlers.

But Patrick was not often, indeed seldom, alone during these rambles. His young host, or his sister, accompanied him, together or separately ; and the latter was oftenest his companion. By her side, as she smiled, or laughed, or blushed at her own sparkling or fervid thoughts, he hourly nourished an absorbing passion. Even yet the unrestrained merriness of her manner, at their first meeting, had not come back to Lady Dorcas ; but he scarce regretted its partial disappearance : indeed, he thought her of more worth and depth without it.* Perhaps he occasionally ventured to draw, from this change in her, conclusions most delightful. It was certain that Dorcas Walsbe

observed the great and pure devotion of his heart for her, and did not put forth, in words, looks, or actions, any intimations, direct or indirect, of her disapproval.

Meantime, Louise Danville never offered to join him or the mistress of Crana castle in their walks abroad. Books of a religious, and, at the same time, of a conventional description, or her needle, seemed to engross all her attention at home. In her present sulkiness, she appeared to make a kind of display of her industry and her little pious observances, and, at the same time, not to be in the least aware that much of all this was childish or mawkish, or more suited to command admiration in the inferior nunnery where she had spent the greater part of her life, than in the world of which she was now a member.

Indeed, chiefly owing, perhaps, to her neglected education, the precocious maturity of Louise Danville's heart was not more striking than the backwardness of her mind ; or, it might be better to say, that while Nature had ripened the one, as in every situation Nature will do, the other had not been gaining observation and judgment sufficient to go hand-in-hand with Nature, to guide her growth, and lop her self-exhausting luxuriance. Louise was a woman in feeling, a child in common-sense. She loved with intensity, with perfected strength ; but she had never yet asked herself if her passion was misplaced, or even requited. Having weakly mistaken a few commonplace speeches from a man of the world, as an acknowledged response to her love, she was ready to resent, as insult and outrage, any change in his manner towards her. Already she has been seen thus acting, to a certain extent. Most unfortunately for herself and all around her, she was capable of allowing her infatuation to overstep any limit.

The face and person, appearance and bearing of this child-woman, indicated her character. It has been said that she was of low stature, and very slight : it is added, that all who looked at her believed she had yet to grow taller and rounder, though such was scarcely the fact. And then, strongly marked as were her features, they gave no combined expression of maturity, with all their ordinary gloom and reserve ; and when impetuous passion blazed from her large black eyes, knitted her brow, and made her dark cheek pale, people wondered to see a child's face so strangely agitated. Her age was between fifteen and sixteen, but she did not seem within two years of it.

While she sat at home, as has been said, and while her friends otherwise engrossed themselves, Philip Walshe did not

renew with Patrick any conversation about his brother Roger. Except upon the few occasions when he forced himself to look cheerful, and speak lightsomely in his sister's presence, Patrick being by, he wandered much alone about his castle, or shut himself up in the old apartment, called the library. But his young visiter did not fail to observe, that towards night he always walked in view of the road to Crana, upon which, as it climbed over the hill, a traveller could be discerned at a good distance ; and though out of respect to his present reserve, Patrick seemed to take no notice, he further suspected that more than once Philip Walshe had joined a horseman, who had come off that road, and conversed secretly with him. Nor did he find it difficult to surmise who were those mysterious visitors, for he remembered Roger's promise to despatch an express to Crana every day, after the lapse of a certain time.

Another of these couriers arrived. Patrick was walking with both his friends on the banks of the river when the rider appeared on the highest point of the hill-road. They all saw him, and observed upon him together: Lady Dorcas wondered who he was ; Patrick, not willing to show any consciousness, supposed him to be some traveller, who had mistaken the road to Crana for the main road. Philip Walshe, in a forced laugh, said he was perhaps a Rapparee reconnoitring the castle for a night attack.

"He is not the first scout then," observed Dorcas ; "I think I have noticed other strange horsemen come down that way lately of an evening."

"By yea and nay, and may be so, sister ; and that's a good reason for looking after the present one," answered Philip, still endeavouring to wear a light manner ; and he left her and Patrick alone, and bent his steps towards a secluded place in his domain, whence the hill-road could still be viewed by him, although he no longer remained visible to them.

Their eyes continued fixed on the rider. He was now descending the road slowly and watchfully. After a few moments he reined up, and seemed replying to a signal from some one below him, and then he spurred his horse, and, as he approached the level of Crana castle, was hid from view.

Dorcas sighed profoundly after his disappearance. Patrick, glancing at her, saw that tears started from her eyes. The understanding between them warranted an inquiry on his part as to the cause of her affliction ; but he feared that it related

to a subject upon which he must not speak with her, and, therefore, not seeming to notice her tears, he remained silent.

This policy did not, however, avail him much. Lady Dorcas, suddenly raising her head, and regarding him steadfastly, said—“Mr. O’Burke, do not *you* really know the mystery from which, and all knowledge of which, Philip Walshe so carefully excludes his only sister?”

Patrick could only temporize, by demanding, in turn, what she meant.

“Nay, answer me, sir, more honestly—excuse the word—but I *am* afflicted. Has not Philip told *you*, at least—(note you—I wish no breach of confidence with him, if you are bound to hold the secret from *me*)—but has not Philip told you upon what errand these dangerous-seeming men come here to visit him?”

Patrick could safely answer no; and he hastened to add that her brother and he had never exchanged a word on the subject, since their arrival at the castle of Crana.

“That is very strange,” she continued, “but it only heightens my dread of his peril in whatever hidden matter so much engages him; for perilous, truly, must the business be, which he will not impart to a single creature that he loves, or that loves him in return.”

Patrick hoped his friend might stand free of all dangerous secrecy, and he protested that he saw no grounds for Lady Dorcas’s sisterly alarm.

She shook her head. “Ah, Mr. O’Burke, I am not so quick to take up fanciful causes for alarm, nor so easily blinded when my reason embraces true ones. Philip has not been able to deceive me into the belief that his heart is at rest, ever since that moonlight adventure in the old castle northward. Nor am I sure that the account he gave us of his own mysterious adventures, while parleying with the outlaw across the dark chasm, is the real and true account. He vehemently insisted, however, that I should receive it as such; and my love for him, and indeed my duty to an only brother, who has stood me in the place of a father, and a kind one, oblige me to question him no closer. But, Mr. O’Burke, my mind has ever since been filled with fears and tremblings; and these stolen visits of unknown and wild-looking men—ay, and other things—possess it with a strong though vague dread of some great misfortune to happen.—Heaven forgive *you*, Louise Danville, for hindering Philip and me, when he was beginning, in his

first feelings, to tell me the naked truth!" pursued Lady Dorcas, much excited.

"I pray you, dear Lady Dorcas, may I inquire what degree of relationship there is between you and your brother and that young gentlewoman," asked Patrick, glad of what he thought was an opportunity to change the direct current of the conversation.

"None, sir, not a link," replied Lady Dorcas; "and I am not afflicted that there is not, although I once wished there might have been. I own to you, Mr. O'Burke,—and do not too quickly call me fickle-minded upon the avowal—that I have loved Mistress Louise more than she will lately let me love her. And this must seem so strange to you, seeing the young lady one of our family, and having witnessed, I hope, our great interest in her, that, as my brother's much-esteemed friend, I deem I owe you further explanation.

"I first met Louise Danville when we were both mere children, in my convent in Spain. She was there, like myself, a class pupil. I liked her from the outset, and she seemed devoted to me, and still more won on me by a great, indeed an excessive zeal and attention. The people and the ways of the convent were new to me; she had been there since her infancy, and of course was well used to both; and when she found that her experience was of service to me, and that I was thankful for it, her whole leisure time seemed occupied with making me happy, and doing me kindnesses in a thousand little ways, the day long.

"As we began to grow out of mere childhood,—I first, for I was her elder by a few years,—this extreme devotion to me did not seem so agreeable as it had been. I felt, though perhaps not distinctly, that it left neither of us enough independent of the other; that I could now dispense with much of it; and that she would appear as a more dignified friend, if she would of herself permit me to do so. But she would not: nay, upon the strength of thus embarrassing me with a great many trifling favours which I did not want, it did appear now and then, that Louise, in her own immatured or immaturable judgment, supposed she had a right to play the mistress over me.

"As neither by nature nor temper I was in much danger of allowing her such a sway, I could not avoid disliking the attempts to establish it; and so our early, and often deeply-vowed friendship was likely to end in very little, when something happened to rivet it anew. The Superior of the house

formally summoned her to an audience one day, and Louise returned to our little sitting-room in much sorrow. I could not long remain ignorant of the cause. Being deemed of an age to think for herself, the Superior had spoken with her of her prospects in life. Hitherto, Louise had never considered the subject. Her recollections did not carry her beyond the convent gates ; she knew of no other home—no other world : it was the world to her ; she knew of no other friends but those she saw around her in it. Now she learned that she had no other ; that her mother was dead, discarded by her family ; her father—the poor desolate Louise burst into bitter tears—her father had abandoned her and her mother in early infancy ; and she was a child of the convent—taken in for charity—and ever since brought up by the Superior.

" So wretched a tale as this, and her great affliction, her pouring tears, blotted out all her little faults, and all my little dislikes to them ; and our friendship was renewed in a form more likely to last. I quitted the convent for the court ; but not before I had promised that we should be companions during our lives ; that I would come back for her whenever my brother should take me to Ireland, and that we should leave Spain together. Before entering into this serious engagement, however, I had obtained Philip's consent to it ; he had even passingly seen Louise, and observed nothing in her character or manners to make him disapprove of her as my constant fireside friend.

" He saw her passingly, Mr. O'Burke, then, when he came to escort me from the convent to the house of our noble friend and relation at court ; and if he saw nothing in her unfitted for my confidence, neither did he see aught to stamp her image particularly on his mind. But *she* saw *him*, and although but as passingly, permitted him to make a very different impression upon her. I did not guess so at the time ; such appears to have been the case, however. Philip has a gallant way, a French way, I believe, or half French and half Irish, of saying foolish things to almost every woman he meets—nay, woman, or girl, or growing girl, I believe, it is nearly all the same with him. Louise Danville, at their first short interview, was more girl than woman, and as much child as either ; and (according to his fashion ever since he wore a beard, or even had hopes of one, as I am told) he addressed her laughingly and flatteringly, but still—for I noticed it—with the kind of easy, impudent condescension which men fops, and especially well-looking ones, put on towards attractive women that are to be.

" Years rolled on. He settled his law disputes here—(oh, Mr. O'Burke, those law disputes! Heaven shield us against a fresh one! and now you have part of my mind upon Philip's present mysterious conduct)—and he came for the last time to Spain, to take me back with him to dear Ireland. We returned to the convent for Louise Danville. She became our adopted sister; she joined us almost instantly upon our homeward journey. Although she had advanced more towards a womanly age than when Philip first met her, his playful manner scarce changed towards her. Again he whispered mock speeches in her ear, and would take her hand, and—" Patrick saw the narrator blush, though it was nearly twilight—"and once, Mr. O'Burke, I saw him offer, without a repulse, a closer little freedom, though belike—though surely—an innocent one too. It seemed to me, however, that it was my duty to address both him and her apart, and to tell them I thought such pastime wrong. Philip, the graceless Philip, laughed at me, in course, and some such words as 'Tut, the poor little convent novice! what dreams she of sinning?' But the moment I spoke to Louise, her secret was shown plainly at once. I need not farther hint what I mean, Mr. O'Burke. If I mistake not, you have yourself guessed it, sometime since."

Patrick admitted that he had noticed in Mistress Louise's manner, symptoms of a passion too strong for disguise.

" Well, Mr. O'Burke, judge me then if I have not some cause for jealousy of my former friend. I do not agree with you, that her feelings are too strong for disguise. No, they are not; such feelings ought to be, and can be, restrained in the bosom of every woman; at least, from making the show of them which Louise Danville does. They ought most especially to be subdued, or well struggled with, whenever it is plain that they direct themselves to an unattainable object. And it is this which causes my lack of love in Louise's regard. Not only she is indifferent to a display of her sentiments, but she is not enough modest even to recollect that Philip of Crana is a flight above her. God knows, Mr. O'Burke, I do not here speak or think of any unfortunate circumstance of poor Louise Danville's parentage, that I may hold it up to uncharitable remark: I humbly hope I may escape the censure I should deserve, even from myself, for such want of feeling, by appealing to my conduct towards her. But when it is so plain that the last and only representative of an ancient and noble family must form an alliance according to his birth—nay, when

it is politic, needful, necessary, that the future mistress of Crana Castle shall add, by her friends, to its safety, in these times of hatred against fellow Christians ; ay, and redeem some of its best acres, placed in jeopardy by Philip's late losses at law ;—when all this is so very plain, I own it does rouse my anger, to see poor Louise Danville selfishly throw out to my brother the temptation of an almost avowed preference—a temptation against which, I fear, few of his sex are at all moments proof."

"Perhaps, owing to her inexperience, she does not weigh the matter as you do ?" observed Patrick : "perhaps, in fact, she does not see it in the same view, therefore cannot weigh it at all."

"She ought to have so seen it long ago, sir ; for I will not hide from you that—without particular mention of her feelings for Philip—I have often hinted to her how he ought to wife, according to all natural course of things."

"And how did she receive your opinions, Lady Dorcas ?" asked Patrick.

"As a wayward child does any advice for its good : and yet with a vehemence of self-will which makes me alarmed at the probability of her passion breaking out in disappointment," answered Lady Dorcas ; "in fact, Mr. O'Burke, knowing my ideas on the subject, she has lately resented them so far as to refuse to converse with me, and once or twice I have detected her fixing upon my face looks of any thing but good-will. So that, sir, along with Philip's concealed whisperings here, with the men who visit us every evening, Louise Danville—her presence in our house—as a member of our family—begins to make me very unhappy."

"Her requital for your kindness to her cannot be called grateful, of a certainty," said Patrick.

"Let that pass : her own heart may judge the question. But, in truth, Mr. O'Burke, the idea has seized upon my mind, that Louise Danville is doomed to aid others—whoever they are—and whatever they purpose—in working harm,—perhaps ruin, to the last of the Walshes of Crana."

Lady Dorcas's voice broke as she uttered these words ; and Patrick, observing that she was much agitated, strove all he could to remove from his fair friend's imagination the dispiriting prepossessions which filled it. Nothing, he insisted, could seem more improbable than that danger or mischance, in any shape, menaced her family—except it might be, indeed, the

supposition that Mistress Louise was to prove herself one of the agents in bringing about an event of the kind.

"I cannot argue with you, Mr. O'Burke," resumed Lady Dorcas: "but are there not true impressions which lie too deep for the demonstration of your schools?—I am not singular," she added, in a low and fear-imparting voice, "in pronouncing Louise Danville an ill-starred visiter for Crana."

"Your brother is also of your opinion?" demanded Patrick, in some surprise.

"No, no," answered his companion, shaking her head—"would to Heaven he were!"

"And may I inquire, who then?"

"Oh, you are a man, and of course, a sage, Mr. O'Burke, and will make little of my authority; for it rests on the word of only a poor, unlettered woman, and an old one too."

Patrick, eagerly declaring how disinclined he was to treat lightly any person or any thing which Lady Dorcas considered in a serious light, begged of her to continue.

"There is an old follower of our family, Mr. O'Burke, who has nursed my mother, ay, and her mother before her, I believe, and she lives in a little hut on the other side of the wood, passing her last years in peaceful preparation for another world. Her reputation for wisdom was a proverb at Crana, before I was born. I remember, in my early infancy, to have heard my dear mother (heaven rest her soul!) speak gravely and respectfully of the gifts of Jane Hefferman, and no servant or relation of the house but will be your warrant, that Jane has given warning, in some concealed hint or other, of every misfortune which befel the family for three generations."

"Well," said Patrick,—upon whom, "man and sage" as he was, this character of the old prophetess made an impression—"is she alive still?"

"She came up to the castle and spoke with me a few days after our coming from the North, Mr. O'Burke," replied Lady Dorcas, "and so I arrive at the point of information you require. Louise Danville was at work with her needle in the window-recess when Jane, bent double, tottered on her gold-headed cane into the room to me; and no sooner had she seated herself, and fixed her glossy gray eyes on that young gentlewoman, than she leaned over towards me, made a signal that I should incline my ears to her lips, and whispered,—"Send her out of the ould place, *ma graw bawn*—she brings no luck into it."

This anecdote affected Patrick in two ways, each almost

opposed to the other. His surprise was in the first instance called up by detecting in Lady Dorcas's character so distinct an acquiescence in the popular beliefs of the time : recollecting the primitive education she had received abroad, immediately after quitting the nursery of Crana castle, he forgave her, however. And next, extraordinary as it may seem, he began himself to bestow some attention upon Jane Hefferman's implied augury. In truth, although he would have been far from committing his wisdom so decidedly as Lady Dorcas had done her's, in support of any case of supernatural influence, he was not quite free of misgivings which then possessed the bosoms, and presided over the legislation of the greatest men in England and Ireland. It is not meant to be insinuated that Jane Hefferman was a witch, or had ever made use of her "gifts," so as to expose herself to the charge of being one ; but for the purposes of illustration merely, it is added, that many years after the time here spoken of, women were tried for witchcraft, in the most considerable towns in Patrick's country, by judges and juries too, of the mode of worship called least superstitious.

"Did you not ask the old woman to be more explicit?" he demanded, after a pause.

"I did, sir ; but her only answer on that particular head, was—'she is not lucky, *ma-vourneen*.' Soon after, however, old Jane asked me a question," continued Lady Dorcas, in the very cadence of sad foreboding.

From her previous words, Patrick concluded the question could not have been an alarming one.

"Judge," answered Lady Dorcas—"this was it—'An' hav'n't you heard the Banshee of the Cranas ever since ye came home to us ?'"

"Your arm, I pray you, Lady Dorcas—the honour of your arm—" interrupted Patrick, glancing into the interior of the wood upon which, for some time, they had been standing.

"Will you— and let us speed homeward," she replied, accepting ~~the~~ port—"the same figure caught my notice among the trees."

"I saw but a man—a stranger though," said Patrick, "and strangely appointed here—armed."

"It was the same—" she rejoined : "to the castle."

CHAPTER XXI.

IN one of the round towers of the castle, Lady Dorcas had fitted up a little sitting-apartment, sacred to herself whenever she chose to be alone, yet it was more generally frequented, with her permission, by Louise Danville, her brother, and his visiter, than were the spacious state-rooms in the body of the building. Here she had her books, her birds, her music, her flowers ; from the window the prospect abroad was extensive and select ; and the pleasantest evenings known in Crana castle, since the arrival of its young occupants, had been spent in the deep recess of that window, while the red harvest sun went down behind the distant mountains.

To it the eyes of Lady Dorcas and Patrick now turned on their hasty walk homeward, in anticipation of the hour of tranquil enjoyment, which both hoped they should yet experience at its casement, before the usual time of repose. It was open, and a young moon struck brilliantly into it, showing the heads and shoulders of two figures, seated a little way within. "Who can they be ?" wondered Lady Dorcas. She increased her speed, and soon recognised her brother and Louise Danville, although their backs were turned to the window, and but so little of their persons visible. Another glance told her that Philip's arm was round his young companion's neck, and that Louise did not seem dissatisfied with his freedom : on the contrary, that she inclined her head so as almost to lean it upon his shoulder.

Lady Dorcas and Patrick stood still. Philip's voice reached them, though not his words : his accents sounded gayly and sportively. Soon after, they heard low and broken sounds from Louise, which he interrupted again in all ~~but~~ bantering tone. Her voice rose higher ; she appeared to appeal to him in great emotion ; he laughed good-humouredly : she started up, flinging away his arm ; he also arose, and both disappear'd into the interior of the room.

Lady Dorcas and Patrick were soon in the little *boudoir*. Louise Danville did not appear ; but Philip was half kneeling at a door, which led into an inner chamber, and, between fits of laughter, entreating her, in mock supplication, to come out to him. The real matter of the previous conversation between

them, of which Lady Dorcas and her confidant had witnessed but a part of the dumb show, will here be necessary.

After her friends had that evening gone out to walk, Louise Danville, as usual, refusing to accompany them, sat alone at her elaborate embroidery. Her bosom had never been so ill at rest. Day by day, Philip Walshe's indifference to her became more manifest; her own love for him more uncontrollable, and her childish yet fierce sense of disappointment more violent. Lady Dorcas's disguised hints as to the alliance Philip ought to make, had also sunk deep into her fretting heart. Of these hints, Lady Dorcas herself has already spoken to a certain extent. She omitted to inform Patrick, however, of one, and by far the most important one, which she had ventured to give to her love-sick friend; namely, that a family of great consideration, in an adjoining county, were disposed to admit his attentions to their beautiful, accomplished, and wealthy daughter. And, perhaps, the reason why Lady Dorcas left Patrick ignorant on this point was, that in intimating a contemplated marriage to Louise, she had gone somewhat beyond facts, for the purpose of warning that young person against the indulgence of her feelings.

There was an additional source of the swellings of bitterness within Louise Danville's soul. With the quickness of a woman's eye, she saw that Lady Dorcas, while thus indirectly opposing her life's hopes, was herself yielding up her heart to Patrick O'Burke, and worse—was beloved by him to an excess of devotion. And that Philip of Crana's sister—her lecturer—a very screech-owl of bad omen in her ears—perhaps the bar between her hopes and their accomplishment—that she should experience all the happiness of love returned, nay, overpaid, while Louise Danville sat down neglected, forsaken,—(for so she imagined herself to be)—wronged, and despised—this was a stinging thought to the vehement convent girl, and it goaded and smarted her, until she said in her heart, after glancing at some glow of satisfaction in Dorcas's face, while they sat together—"I hate you!"

Stealthily, upon this evening, she watched Philip, Dorcas, and Patrick, go out upon their ramble, and all the feelings attributed to her worked as she gazed after them along the sunny path which led to the nearest wood. Evil impulses to revenge for the supposed injury inflicted on her, had before now darted through her mind. At present, she allowed them more than usual scope. "Yes," she muttered, clenching her little hand, and holding it up in threat, "Do—do go away from

Crana, to kneel down with your false speeches before another lady,—do—do forget and forswear your words and looks to me,—do leave me, for my whole life long, a thing that *she* may point the finger at.” A sudden burst of passionate tears interrupted the oath of vengeance she was about to make ; she wept and sobbed convulsively ; she almost screamed ; and leaning her arm against the recess of the window, and her head upon her arm, delivered herself up to the fit. And it was strange that throes of wild and wayward tenderness were now mixed up with her anger against Philip Walshe.

Some time elapsed, and she did not hear a quick and joyous step coming up the winding stone-stairs of the tower. It was Philip, after conversing with his courier, and he was all impatience to say a few words of happy tidings to Patrick O’Burke, and to indulge, before his sister’s face, the unaffected good spirits which those tidings were his warrant for experiencing. He was sure that both must have returned before him to the castle.

He entered the apartment, calling out their names, in an echo of his former gay tones : and—“ What ?” he continued, “ a-gadding abroad yet ? becoming sworn ‘ minions of the moon ?’ I suspected as much, and so, even let them—ah ! my own little passion !” Philip went on, seeing Louise in the window-recess—“ And what do you, moping here, at home, and others so gleeish in the fair moonlight ?—or I either ? Come ! shall we have a race together along the wood-path ? —What say you ?—Angry with me, and will not answer ?” He approached close to her. “ No, not angry, but worse, I see—crying—and why, dear Louise ?” taking her hand. “ Are you not happy among us ?—what frets you ?—Only tell Philip Walshe what, and he will visit fairy land, where you ought to be queen, or get a charm to make you smile.”

She allowed him to take and retain her hand, but did not raise her head, nor speak to him. She continued to weep, but her tears were softer than those she had been shedding. He resumed.

“ Nay, my dainty Louise, this is wormwood to poor me. Since you will not give me your mind to-night, forget the cause of your grief until to-morrow, whatever it is. I want to be very happy for a few hours to come ; and since you refuse the moonlight out of doors, let me seat you in it here at the window. She allowed him to lead her to a stool and sit by her side.

“ There now—and now let us do the infectious light due

honour, and be what all ought to be, who court it to shine on them—lovers ;—lovers of poetical mood and spirit. Will you speech to me in rhyme, if I so open with you ?—but first, the action to the word”—he stole his arm round her drooping neck ;—she was passive, because surprised into the joy of having him so near her—“ And so—to begin,—but hold—I forget—you told me once you were too young—or too little—no—too young to know how to make love-speeches, either in prose or in rhyme, did you not ?”

“ That was some years ago,” she said.

“ Ay !—yes—now that I remember, sure enough it was ; and in the years that have since passed lies the difference—is it not so ?”

“ They have brought no difference to me.”

“ Then you are still too—I know not what—but too something for it ?”

“ Perhaps—for love-speeches.”

“ Oh ! but not for love-thoughts. In good earnest, my little passion, and really, and indeed now, answer me—*Can they come into your dear little head so soon ?*” The childish appearance, and, in every respect but one, the childish mental manners of Louise had, indeed, to this hour, kept the indifferent and not very observant Philip from considering her capable of even comprehending the subject they spoke on. “ I am curious in my studies of Mistress Nature,” he continued—“ an humble philosopher in that way, if it please you ; so, I pray you, my dear, enlighten me,—*can they ?*”

“ If you supposed they could not before now, it was idle of you, at the least, to address me as if they could,” she answered.

“ What ! to swear so often by the blue sky, and all in it, that I loved you to the death ?”

“ Yes ; I mean such idle perjuries.”

“ Perjuries ? no, on my soul, truths !”

Continuing to regard her as an irresponsible person in this discussion, he now supposed that his late absence of manner had hurt or offended her childish pride ; that therefore she was afflicted ; and that to relieve her, he had only to renew his former trifling, using language which, with an almost child, would but convey the soothing idea of being an object of interest to him.

“ Truths, my Mab ! Truths that I will uphold before the world !—and so, now be friends with me once again, and let it tell me what it never yet spoke out plain to me, the dainty

dearee—let it whisper into my ear, that for the universe of true love I offer, it gives me one little nut-shell full in return: let it say so now; there; let it—" his voice grew really kind, for he wished to beguile her into good-humour, and he mumbled the last words with his lips touching her cheek. He was answered in a way he dreamed not of. Again the inexperienced and self-blinding girl believed him serious and sincere, and thrown off her guard by the intoxicating happiness of her feelings, she said, in a low voice, but one that no child could feign, "As much love, and as great a love, as a woman ever gave, I give you in return."

Philip slightly started, and drew back his lips from her wet though burning cheek. His philosophy gained a new light. And his first thought was of the call loudly made upon him to undeceive and divert the feelings to which he had given rise in the bosom of his poor little playmate. Yet, according to his nature and character, he allowed himself to be amused the next instant at the ridiculous part he was enacting; and in a mixture of both those humours, he went on, almost instantly after her impassioned avowal—"To be sure, to be sure, my empress of tiny beauties, great in extent and in kind must be the love you have for me; and even so great are my thanks; ay, and my faithful wish to reward it with a life of humble services; as thus—to make a scheme. Hitherto you have led but a triste time of it in this old castle; indeed, I have been sad myself since our arrival from far North."

"I know it," she observed.

"But, my passion, merrier days are in store for us: I see it will soon be a race between Dorcas and me, which shall first reach the marrying-post; and, no matter which—then shall the old walks blaze, and the old rafters ring, and you be the crowned queen of all our revellings and pleasures; none other will Dorcas choose for her chief bride's maid, I am sure; and none other shall Philip Walshe's lady choose either, if he have words or wit to guide her choice; and so—"

"What do you speak of, now?" she interrupted: "brides' maids and brides? who? how?"

"My say-love so innocent, indeed? Heaven help it then, it shall hear the riddle read; thus—"

"I read it without help, at a question," she resumed; "Whom mean you to be first bride's maid at your coming wedding?"

"Why, have I not spoken the speech plainly?—you, child."

"Villain!" and with this word she started from his side,

flinging away his arm, walked rapidly across the room, entered the inner chamber, furiously shut to the door, and bolted it.

"Well," soliloquized Philip Walshe; "I am a most be-flattered gallant in this matter, of a certainty;" and yielding to the sense of the absurd, which was a foremost trait in his character, he laughed heartily, approached the door she had made fast, knelt at it, and in this situation was found by his sister and his friend, speaking in through the key-hole.

A few words to Lady Dorcas explained how matters stood between him and Louise, and he laughed again, and was now joined in his mirth by his sister, loud enough to be heard in the next chamber,—at least, Dorcas wished that such might be the case.

"Go, Dorcas, and beseech her forth to us," continued Philip, in a whisper: "'tis a pettish, irrational little body, but must meet nothing but kindness from us still."

"I know it," answered his sister; "and, except in this one whim, God sees I wish to be a real sister to her—" and she advanced to the door.

"O'Burke, fair news," resumed Philip, taking Patrick aside, and shaking his hand—"Poor Roger!—" his voice and his smiles together failed him.

"Is at large?" demanded Patrick.

"He is, lad—and we shall see him to-night in the castle; at present, he lingers not far off, and as soon as the night grows quieter, and that people are out of the way, old Rory will steal him in to us."

Patrick returned the joyous pressure of Philip's hand, and was going to mention having seen an armed stranger in the wood, when they were interrupted.

Lady Dorcas had begun to address Louise Danville through the closed door in a very gentle and conciliating tone of voice, but received no answer. Presently, while her brother and O'Burke spoke aside, her words and accents became more earnest; and at length, slightly yielding to impatience, she said—"Unbolt the door, I entreat you, child, and sit down among us, like a person of sense."

She was instantly obeyed. The bolt shot back, the door flew open, and Louise stepped out.

"Child!—and you too, Lady Dorcas Walshe, have caught up his insulting word? caught up!—have you not taught him to speak it of me!—have you not? ye can laugh together, too, at the poor, friendless convent girl?—meanwhile, that the

Lady Dorcas herself is woman complete, to waste hours of moonlight in the wood with her own dear friend?"

"Louise!" remonstrated Lady Dorcas, in great confusion, as she offered to take her hand,—"have a care, have a care."

"Have a care, you, Mademoiselle!" retorted Louise, retiring from her—"and you also Philip Walshe, have a care!—Between ye both, I stand outraged and taunted to-night—here, in your strange land—here, in your house—decoyed from my peaceful convent, and dragged with ye through the cold world, only to be so treated!"

"Dear Louise!" pleaded Philip.

"Silence, sir!" she exclaimed, stamping her small foot—"Dare not to insult me once again by the language that has deceived me!—the language that has broken my heart—"she was about to yield to tears, but her phrensy blazed out anew before one single tear could damp it—"the language that has made me mad?—ay, Dorcas Walshe—ay, Philip Walshe, have a care!—Philip Walshe, though I call you no Baron of Crana;"—she almost ran, passed them, left the apartment, and rapidly descended the stairs of the tower.

Philip looked expressively at O'Burke, now not in a mood to renew his laughter at the extravagance of the infatuated Louise: her last words shot coldly to his heart. Lady Dorcas gazed from one to another of the friends: she also had caught those words. All remained silent for some time. Philip broke the disagreeable pause.

"Well, I can but say I am a dangerous fellow to trust in women's company any age from twelve to sixty, at the least"—endeavouring to resume his gayety; "I must needs forget all my conquests now, however, for an hour or so, to sit down in the old library and pen a letter of business—so, good-by, sister, but not for the night, if possible," and he left the boudoir as suddenly as Louise had done.

"Now, Mr. O'Burke," said Lady Dorcas, sitting down in the window-recess, "you will perhaps give some thought to my forebodings of evil to us all from Louise Danville."

"You allude to what she said at parting," answered Patrick; "it was indeed a strange speech, yet surely as wild and unmeaning as strange."

"God grant it!" resumed Lady Dorcas, her accents scarce audible, while she seemed to shudder. Of a sudden she started, crying "Hist!" and bent her head in a listening attitude. "It was from the great wood it came," she resumed, addressing Patrick.

"What?" he asked, observing that her cheeks were very pale in the moonshine, and her eyes glittering with excitement.

"What?" he asked a second time, in a whisper.

"That low wailing," she replied.

"I heard it not; and surely there was no such thing," he said. "Come, Lady Dorcas, let us leave this solitary chamber, and repair to the more frequented part of the castle, where we shall find cheerful lights and faces; the place and the hour have an effect on your spirits. Come, allow me to lead you down."

"You remember old Jane's question to me?" inquired Lady Dorcas, not seeming to have heard him; "the question I told you of abroad in the grounds this evening, when we were interrupted, and could speak no farther? You do—I see it in your looks. Well, I answered her; and doubtless, in your wisdom, you will smile to hear how. Do so, if it please you; only remember that my word of truth is at stake."

"And you answered—yes?" demanded Patrick.

"I did—I answered yes; for three times that I had heard the warning spirit of our family; and for twice that I had seen, as well as heard."

Patrick O'Burke drew back in his seat, and uttered, below his breath, an ejaculation of surprise and awe: for whether or no Lady Dorcas laboured under a delusion, there could be no question of the deep sincerity of her conviction that she did not.

"First, O'Burke, about three days after we arrived in the castle, I could not sleep one night for the lament of the Banshee; it came sometimes to the windows of my chamber; sometimes it sunk low into the court-yard; sometimes it mounted over the roof; and the voice was so full of grief, of utter heart-breaking grief, as it were, that its cadences, as well as my thought of the coming wo it foretold, made me weep and sob in my bed."

"It was a stormy night?" asked Patrick.

"It was as mild a night as ever reigned in the heavens. You are incredulous, O'Burke; but you need not be. Nothing is better known of our family than that it has had its Banshee since the days of its founder, always giving notice of approaching misfortune—death, or persecution, or poverty, as Heaven might have willed. Look out with me from this window—look across all the hills and valleys near to us, and rest your eye upon the top of that distant, rocky mountain, which is barely visible—a shade and a line against the moon-lit sky. In

former times, that mountain was ours, and the estate of the Walshes ran from their castle—ay, and from far behind their castle—to its opposite base ; and upon its craggy and lonesome summit, where a human foot never sounded, there the Banshee had her bed."

" 'Tis a sweet fancy, if not as true a story," remarked Patrick ; " and a like story, be it true or false, was told me in my boyhood of a *Banshee* of my own family ; but a poet of my father's acquaintance would have our attendant spirit a politician merely, only bewailing our national misfortunes in her distant bed, and finally bidding adieu to sorrow of every kind, at the prospect (miscalculated, however, Banshee, though it was) of good luck to Ireland before the breaking out of the last Civil wars. I quote the meaning of the song the poet made."

" I know the song," said Lady Dórcas ; " judge if I do." She took up a guitar, and touching it, sang the following words to a slow moaning air :—

" Oh, my bed,
At the head
Of the water none have found ;
Where it wells,
Mid the swells
Of the hill-top's broken ground !
For a time,
And a time,
And through changes of the clime,
There I've lain,
To complain,
And wail and weep the fall
Of the mighty and the grand,
Of Erin's widow'd land,
Who, when gone,
Left not one,
On her name aloud to call.

Oh, my wail
Did prevail
O'er the world—old silence there,
Till no bird
Near me stirr'd,
To scream to it in the air—
Till the dun rocks wore to gray,
And the wild shrubs wore away,
And I thought
'Twas my lot,
Still bewailing her to stay
Until the end of all ;
Because ever since her fall

None would shout
Her name out,
And let me hear the call !

Oh, at last,
On the blast,
From the plains of men below,
It has come,
To make dumb
My long, long voice of wo—
That echo of old fame !
That shout for her old name !
And at last,
For the past,
I may hush my grief and shame !
And, as my gray rocks maut,
Watch my waters as they shoot
Through the cleft,
Open left,
From the old tree's crumbled root."

"Thanks," said Patrick, "for an old ditty, which awakens many of the bitter-sweet recollections of childhood and boyhood;" and he was glad to believe that the mention of the song, and her singing it, had helped to chase away the sad fancies, or realities, of which she had been speaking. He mistook, however; for after a short and thoughtful pause, she resumed abruptly, though her tones were still low.

"The next night that I heard it, O'Burke, and it was about a week afterward, I arose, dressed myself, and, strengthened by a strange curiosity, listened until the Banshee's cries came close to my window. Then I quickly pulled aside the shutters and saw her face—if face I may call it—disappearing from the glass in the darkness."

"Could they have been less unearthly features?" still questioned Patrick.

"My chamber is a tall tree's height from the ground," she answered. "And after that, the voice was silent for the night; nor did I again hear or see the Banshee till the very last night."

"Last night, Lady Dorcas?"

"You shall hear. I had not lain down to repose, but sat reading. Her lament arose at a distance in the direction of the great wood, and came nearer and nearer by degrees, till as before, it gained my window. Again I moved to open the shutters; at my first step, it ascended upwards, and rested at the top story of the castle. I left my chamber, mounted to the

uninhabited one over it, and boldly challenged the spirit, whose face, and part of whose form, half covered with a scarlet cloak, or the seeming of such, appeared also there at an unclosed window. My hasty words were not spoken when it a second time withdrew, and its wail died away gradually in the quarter whence it had approached the castle. O'Burke, made desperate by my fears for the fate of my family and myself, I was soon after in the great wood. I was aware where the castle keys lay, and used them. You know the open spot in the wood, near its centre, which we once thought beautifully lonesome and fearful, in the reign of the moon. Ere I gained that place, I could see into it ; and there, still lamenting and weeping her unearthly tears, there the Banshee sat, upon a shattered stump, winding up her long yellow hair, which streamed over her scarlet cloak in the full moonlight."

"Did the spirit wait for a repetition of your challenge till you gained the opening ?" asked Patrick, who recognised in Lody Dorcas's sketch of the Banshee the popular one which since childhood had invariably been impressed on his own mind.

"No. When I stood on the patch of grass, I was alone ; nor in my hurried approach to it had I gained more than one or two imperfect glances of the Banshee from between the stems of the trees. And then, O'Burke, my courage, or whatever it was, failed me at finding myself out, unprotected, at such an hour of the night, in such a place, and I ran back wildly, I believe, to the castle ; for I can remember little of gaining the portal, or of locking it and the other gates, or even of ascending to my chamber, until, in the glimmer of the morning, I found myself lying on my bed, and recovering, it must have been, from a fainting-fit."

"Or from a dream," was Patrick's reflection ; and he was about to submit the probability to her consideration, when Rory Laberty's voice was heard, as he ascended the tower-stairs to the little boudoir.

The old man appeared before Dorcas and Patrick in remarkable agitation, even for him. He at first called out for the Baron of Crana, as if to that individual in particular he wished to communicate the cause of his tremblings. O'Burke soon obtained his confidence, however ; and now he began, very strangely, by saying that he had been sent to warn the Baron of Crana that his downfall, and the downfall of his name, was at hand.

"Sent !—by whom ?" questioned Lady Dorcas.

He could not tell ; he did not know ; it all happened in an instant, out by the river-side ; and the words, and the vision that spoke them, came and went like “the dash of the moon-shine under a cloudy night.”

Lady Dorcas had arisen ; she sat down again in great emotion. Her late mood of mind, and the subject which had engaged it, helped to make this vague announcement almost terrible to her. Patrick pressed Rory to be more explicit ; but either he could not, having already imparted his story as distinctly as its circumstances were stamped on his own comprehension, or else his impatience to speak with Philip Walshe would not allow him to collect his senses and arrange his words ; for while yet exhorted to state what he meant in a clearer manner, the old man hurried down the stairs, crying out for “The Baron of Crana ! the last Baron of Crana !”

To understand the real cause of his alarm, Louise Danville shall be followed, after her sudden departure from the tower.

Her friends only supposed that she left them to vent her excessive passion in the solitude of her own chamber. From the door which led thither, however, she turned her quick steps, and issued through the portal of the castle, then through the embattled entrance in the ballium, and flitted towards the river-side—Heaven knows in what impulse to evil ! She had declared herself to have been made mad ; reason certainly had little sway over her present temper. To any one who should have met her at this moment, her face would have told the fury of her heart and the weakness of her mind, for no extreme of provocation warranted its vehement expressions. Her eyes rolled ; her dark cheek was unearthly pale ; specks of foam were at the corners of her mouth ; her lips stood wide apart, and her teeth were set, and sometimes her under-jaw moved, grinding them together. And in a face so young, and even so attractive, and thrown out by a heart enshrined in so slight a frame, such passion was peculiarly frightful.

Within sight of the river, broken sentences escaped her. “ My back to you, accursed Crana !—the sole of my foot to your ground”—spurning it—“ for the last time ! Wherever I go, if ever I pass through this black night, or cross that shining water, the world is wide enough to afford me a corner, far, far away from your gates ! Wide enough it is, too, and ready enough to let me plan my requital to them ! ” She now stood near the river’s brink, upon a shelving bank, which hid much of the strand beneath her ; and here she paused, stamping her heel in

the crumbling soil, her hands clenched at her side, while she unconsciously gave vent to her rage, and to her unshaped threats of vengeance upon Philip of Crana.

A man's head rose above the bank on which she stood; it would seem that he had been sitting under its shadow. She knew him as soon as their eyes met, and was not startled; on the contrary, she clapped her hands together, and uttered a cry at once of recognition and satisfaction.

"I told you we should speak of the Dunluce matter again, fair mistress," said John Gernon.

"And is it to speak of it again you have broken the ropes I saw you tied in there, and have come hither to-night?" she asked.

"Not without such hopes am I here to-night," he replied; "although my direct business is to watch about the mouth of that hole over your head for the return to his nightly nest of an outlaw, whose capture, dead or alive, will bring something to my poke, in lieu of a gift of yours, mistress, that I was plundered of."

"Yes, yes; they cheated you—that makes you amends again;" and scarce knowing what she did, though in a vague feeling to conciliate the bravo, Louise flung him her purse; then she turned her head to glance at the place behind her of which he had spoken. The river-path was here narrowed by shelving rocks of considerable height, of which the bases almost touched the skirts of her robe as she stood. At about a third part of the distance up towards their summit was a small fissure, barely wide enough to admit a man's body, though it was known to open into a large cave, which in the first rage of the law against priests some years before, had been the hiding-place of a celebrated ecclesiastic, as well as the rendezvous of many of his scattered or disguised flock, to join him in weekly devotions; and thenceforward it had borne the name of Polhan-Aiffrin, or mass-cave.

"I see," resumed Louise Danville, speaking incoherently; "a brave sleeping-chamber the outlaw has chosen, and I wish you all success in surprising him asleep. You are a man of some power and weight, sir," she continued, in a certain view, "to be intrusted with such an enterprise; and also to escape, as you needs must have done, the ropes and the menaces of the people in whose hands I last saw you?"

"Oh, mistress," replied Gernon, "they meant me little harm, although they thought it prudent to make a show of treating

me as a prisoner to the faces of your excellent friends that night."

" My friends!" she repeated, bitterly.

" Ah!" questioned John Geron, laughing ironically ; " you have found them out, then?"

" I have," she answered.

" As I told you," he observed, " at Dunluce."

" Ay, found them out, and more concerning them than they should like to know from my lips," resumed Louise Danville.

" Or from mine, I warrant you—I guess what you mean, mistress." He did, indeed, guess, though his guess was a very uncertain one.

" How is that, sir?" she demanded.

" Tut!—when you stole tiptoe after Philip Walshe and Master Patrick O'Burke that time, outside the ruins we had all been standing in ; and when you stooped behind the big stone to listen to their secret, do you think, mistress, that my eyes, or feet, or ears, either, were idle?"

" You overheard them then, as I did?"

" Every word." In this answer John Geron deliberately told a falsehood ; but he as deliberately pursued a long-cherished purpose—one, indeed, laid up in his mind since the night they spoke of. From having watched Louise conceal herself behind the stone, whence Philip Walshe caught a glimpse of her figure returning to the ruins, he felt assured that she had learned the particulars of the true cause of the young Baron's emotion : from having himself overheard Philip's first suspicious words to Lady Dorcas, he shrewdly concluded that the explanation afterward given by the brother to the sister was mere fiction : from having marked the unguarded petulance of Louise Danville, and conjectured its cause, he soon measured her character ; and upon the weaknesses and hastiness of that character were built schemes which he now carried into effect, word by word, as she and he thus suddenly and strangely conversed together.

" Ay, indeed?" cried Louise, questioning, though little doubting, his last assertion,—" Then you know, as well as I do, who is the real living Baron of Crana?" and she spoke in a tone and manner of exultation.

" Huth!—to be sure I do!" he replied, with the assumed indifference of confidence. " Listen, bachelors!" he whispered, stooping for an instant under the bank—then he resumed his speech to her : " The living Roger Walshe, the elder brother of Philip, is the real living Baron of Crana."

"He is!" assented the beguiled and miserable girl, the triumph of her voice increased.

"Roger Walshe, lately calling himself Randal Oge O'Hagan!" continued Gernon, encouraging her excitement, by using violent tones, like her own. Again she confirmed his statement.

"And this you heard, fair mistress, told by Philip Walshe to Patrick O'Burke?"

A third time Louise Danville was about to reply to Gernon, but found herself interrupted. A creature—so unlike a breathing human being in features, limbs, and attire, that his appearance imparted supernatural fear—stood on a ledge of rock under the Polh-an-Aiffrin, and in a hoarse whisper, broken by snatches of a weak scream, called on her by her name to be silent. This apparition was worn to skin and bone, and had upon his naked body only the shreds of something like a blanket; his long grizzled hair and neglected beard fell down his shoulders, and disguised his mouth and cheeks; his eyes were half-pursed up in relaxed wrinkles, and yet they gave out a glassy lustre in the moonlight.

"Good even, Father James!" shouted Gernon;—"Caught at last, sir!—stand!" and he presented a carbine. Father James it was. He had wandered from the North to the South, no one could conjecture how; and here, as it afterward appeared, he had fixed his residence, among a people quite strangers to him, and even unacquainted with his hidden calling, only attracted by the celebrated cave which once had sheltered another outlaw priest. Whether before to-night he had been aware of his proximity to some of his old friends, it became impossible to learn.

In answer to Gernon's salutation and challenge, he ran along the ledge of rock, and then by the river-path, towards Crana castle, saying,—"No, no! no stand! none for me now, till my voice is lifted up against your new treachery!"—and he escaped immediate capture; and it was he who, during his wild flight, sent Rory Laherty to Philip Walshe with some imperfectly-delivered warning of the danger in which Louise Danville had placed the family of Crana.

CHAPTER XXII.

AFTER Rory Laherty's departure from the tower, Lady Dorcas and Patrick continued some time there together. The conversation between them finally took a particular turn, of which more will soon appear. They were interrupted by a message from Philip Walshe to Patrick, requesting his immediate company on pressing business.

Patrick found his host in the old library.

"A despatch for the O'Burke from Pendergast Hall," said Philip, as soon as he entered, pointing to a large and well-sealed letter which lay on the table: "its bearer, just arrived to us, has ridden hard; I pray you, Patrick, sink ceremony, and read it off-hand; for I have other matters to speak on when you are at leisure."

His friend accordingly opened the letter, and began to peruse it. Philip Walshe saw Patrick's features express much agitation: surprise first, and then some deeper feeling; the blood mounted to his cheeks, and moisture trembled on his eyelids.

"No bad news, I trust?" asked Philip.

"None for me, certainly," answered Patrick: "Do me the kindness to read the letter."

He gave it to Philip Walshe, retaining a folded parchment which it had enclosed. It was as follows, under the hand of Miles Pendergast:—

"MY DEAR SON,

"I have undergone great inquietude here in consequence of the late adventures which took place under my roof. Notwithstanding my well-known and, I may say, well-proved loyalty during my whole life, men in authority about me, who fancy themselves still more loyal than I have ever been, applied the severities of the law to me immediately after your departure with your friends, and fined me largely, and even imprisoned me during one calendar month, on the charge of priest-biding, and of aiding and abetting in the rescue of an outlaw priest, and what not. I have but just regained my liberty. But

while I was a prisoner, I made up my mind to dwell no longer at Pendergast Hall, nor indeed among those who, I believe, have treated me harshly, if not unjustly, to say nothing of ungenerously. And, upon this, I got my estate sold, and turned into sterling money, and the old house is already inhabited by the purchaser, and in a few hours I shall be on my way to see you, dear Patrick, God willing. Offer my friendly respects to the Baron of Crana and Lady Dorcas, and tell them I am a suitor for their hospitality, until I can advise and settle with you what were best for both of us to do in the present turn of fortune.

"For as much thought as I have yet been able to bestow on the matter, it seems to me that we should purchase lands with our ready money somewhere in the South of this country ; and that I might live with you, at the least, until you marry, if not afterward (and I boast to myself of making shrewd guesses on that point, but will say no more till I can observe how you and the lady agree together, in her own house, after a month's acquaintance). If you cannot enjoy peace, and the good-will of your neighbours, on account of your religion, in the South, then, I reckon, we must needs think of settling in some foreign country ; although, in such a case, I should be the sufferer, for the want of a decorous practice of my own religion ; but we are to talk at large on the question.

"Wherever we may be fated to buy our new acres, I will pay half the purchase-money ; in this letter you will find a deed, putting you in possession of the other half, which it may become necessary to advance. The whole is the produce of the sale of Pendergast Hall. The large sums which I had in Government securities I have settled on my brothers' children ; so that, although they had been somewhat in need, they will henceforth have little to complain of against me, or little cause of jealousy towards my adopted son.

"This letter, sent to apprise you of my coming to Crana castle, will be my herald for no more than some hours, I trust ; till when, regard me, my dear Patrick, as, in the heart, though not in blood,

"Your loving father,
"MILES PENDERGAST."

"The name of an honest Protestant," said Philip Walshe, as he ended the perusal of the letter ; "and that is a vast admission from me whom I now and then suspect of being

a bigoted Papist.—Well, Patrick, and what is this about Dorcas?"

" You can best tell what it is *to be*," answered O'Burke.

" Seriously ?" demanded Philip.

" Seriously," answered his friend.

" But my sister, surely, is to speak first ?"

" Why, I believe I may venture to hint—" began Patrick modestly—

" That she has spoken already ?" interrupted Philip.

" Or nearly so."

" When, for Heaven's sake ?"

" About half an hour ago ; and I did not thank you for sending one to cheat me of the opportunity of hearing her speak a little more, belike Philip—brother Philip—is it ?"

" Why, I suppose so, O'Burke," replied Philip, laughing lightly, although he grasped with all his strength the hand which was held out to him, and tears were starting to his eyes—" but I must needs say 'tis a hurried matter."

" We cannot help that," said Patrick ; " but now for another topic."

" Yes, yes," replied his friend, in a whisper ; " he is to come in here to us. Rory Laherty has been on the watch for him since nightfall, and, as I half told you, is to steal in the poor fellow through the gates, and then through this secret door ;" he lifted up some tattered tapestry and showed one :—" And O'Burke, I sent for you to be with me during our conversation, that you may assist us in devising what is best to do."

" But Rory Laherty abandoned his post of watch a while ago ?"

" The old fool, he did, and came yelling and romancing to me here, with some story of a moonlight ghost, who would pass for a prophet ; but I drove back Rory with a laugh and a loud word, to take up his post again."

" The servants are not to see Roger ?"

" No, no," answered Philip Walshe, with a sudden sigh, as he drew in his under-lip : " although here, the poor wanderer is to eat and drink without their attendance ; ay, and sleep a night under the old roof."

" And Dorcas ? Must she still be excluded from our confidence ?" Patrick put this question with the view of assuaging Dorcas's uneasiness on the score of her brother's late mysterious conduct towards her.

" I do not know—I cannot determine yet; much will

depend upon our meeting with poor Roger," was Philip's answer.

" You expect to see him, soon ? "

" Every moment, now."

There was a break in their conversation. Philip Walshe sighed quickly again, and the seriousness and anxiety which had been recently coming over his face settled into its fixed expression. After casting his eyes some minutes on the floor, he glanced suddenly towards the door of the library ; walked to it ; assured himself it was secured ; scrutinized the windows in like manner ; stopped in the middle of the apartment, clasping his hands before him, and looked thoughtfully around ; and then he went to a cupboard, took from it cold viands, wine, and glasses ; laid them on the table ; arranged the logs of wood which blazed on the large hearth ; trimmed the lamp, and with another sigh, sank into a chair.

Patrick did not interrupt his reverie. It was, however, soon broken up. Two soft knocks were heard at the private door. He started from his seat, looking expressively into Patrick's face, and raising his finger, he trod lightly, on tiptoe, across the room ; raised up the fragments of tapestry ; touched a spring-bolt ; and, as the brothers embraced, Patrick heard their sobs. They kissed each other's cheeks twice, and then, hand in hand, advanced to the fire ; but not before Philip had whispered to the invisible Rory Laherty—" Watch still, and watch well !" and fastened the private door, and let the tapestry fall over it.

The Baron of Crana, Roger Walshe, wore a heavy horseman's cloak, but under it the old regimentals in which Patrick had last seen him, when he was racing across the chasm at the castle of Dunluce ; his great jack-boots, and the precise three-cocked hat, edged with tarnished gold-lace, like that on his long-skirted body-coat, which he carried in his hand, were also military. In fact, he was now habited in the identical uniform in which he had marched to bear his part in the battle of Hillsborough, and which, during his late profession, had often served him as one of his convenient disguises.

It was pitiable to note the self-undervaluing air, and the expression of countenance, with which he entered—after having stealthily gained it—one of the rooms in the house of his father's—in his own castle. Patrick O'Burke knew at a glance that he thought of having been long rendered unworthy of occupying it, by his misfortunes and his crimes. His step and carriage also had that want of freedom, and of being at home,

which marks the entry of an humble man into an apartment above his rank in life ; years of predatory shifting about, from one mean haunt to another, doubtless, had brought down his mind to this strangeness amid the mute memorials of his early youth.

With eyes wet from the meeting between him and his brother, he looked around him, smiling vaguely, until Philip Walshe directed his attention to the son of his old friend, Sir Redmond O'Burke. Roger, then fixing his eyes on Patrick, and still smiling, stopped short, and muttered inaudibly, and bowed—even not so spiritedly as Patrick had seen him do in his character of John Johnson. He did not offer his hand to his young acquaintance ; and when, pitying him, O'Burke stepped forward cordially and extended his, Roger of Crana accepted the salutation with the embarrassment of an inferior.

" Your ride, dear Roger, has given you a mind for a poor supper with us," said Philip.

" Ay, I thank you, Philip," he answered, ungracefully occupying the chair which his brother drew to the fire for him.

" Hold ! I make but an indifferent butler or pantry-man," resumed Philip—" we want plates here," and he went to the cupboard.

" And is it turning yourself into waiting-man upon me, you are, Phil, *ma-chree?*" asked Roger, smiling wretchedly, while fresh tears came to his eyes.

" And why not, Roger, dear, for lack of better ?" demanded Philip, returning to the table, and laying a hand on his shoulder : " You are my mother's eldest son," he continued, in an impressive voice, " and more—let law-makers say what they will, the rightful lord of this castle, and my master in it."

" Ah ! that's foolish talk," was Roger's only reply. They began to make their meal. He continued to be embarrassed even in the little actions and etiquette of the table. Patrick reflected how much he must have unlearned in every thing. Even the expressions of his face, so far as regarded indication of rank, were deficient : its colour and texture seemed vulgar ; nay, his speech, and the very hoarse cadences of his voice, had necessarily acquired their present character, since his abandonment of his name and of his station in the world. Once or twice Patrick detected him eyeing askance his own family crest upon articles of plate which lay upon the table.

The supper was drawing to a close. The brothers had spoken but little to each other, though, as they pledged healths

across the table, their looks told much. Roger suddenly asked some questions.

" You spoke of the mother a while ago, Philip ;—she died while I was with Hamilton in the North ; but you came home from your school in Spain a few days after I left her, did you not ?"

" I did, Roger," answered Philip.

" And, by course, you were here when she was called away from us ?"

" I was at her bedside, brother."

" In what room of the castle did she die, Philip, dear ?

Philip mentioned the chamber by a familiar name.

" And you buried her in the chapel to be sure ?" continued Roger. Philip assented.

" If it's not very dangerous for us to do," Roger resumed, after a short pause,—" that is, Philip, if you don't think we might be seen together by any of the servants of your house, I'd be asking you, Phil, *ma-chree*, to take me to that bedside, and then down to the ould chapel."

The brothers had been looking away from each other. Now their eyes suddenly met, and at the same instant filled ; and after struggling for a moment with his inward yearnings, Philip bent his head to the table, covered his face with his hands, and wept violently.

When the fit passed away, he arose without a word, opened the door of the apartment, stepped cautiously out, remained absent a short time, returned, took up the lamp from the table, beckoned to Roger, and they withdrew together.

" Poor Roger Walshe !" reflected Patrick, when thus left alone—" that one thought of his dead mother has annihilated all of his character, which is the growth of the time since they parted to this present hour."

When Roger and Philip returned to Patrick, the former said —evidently taking up a subject which had been touched upon between them—

" The only thing, brother, which I am almost sure *she* will forgive me, is the hiding who and what I was as long as I could, after I was forced to return to my own country. But, indeed, from the day that I learned I had been outlawed in Meath, my thoughts only ran upon hiding my existence, while yet our father lived, also."

" It was a noble thought, dear Roger," said Philip ; " that so you might continue a name and an estate to your family."

" Tut, no, Philip ; give me no extraordinary praise : I only

said to myself—‘ Since I am a beggar, by my own making, too, if not by my own fault, I will try and save from beggary my brother, my sister, and my name and theirs: since the laws disqualify me from being Baron of Crana, Philip, and his issue after him, or else little Dorcas and hers, shall have the old place, and the old grounds, without legal taint; and thereupon I went to France, countenancing the story of my fall at Hillsborough, even to the face of all my family.’ ”

“ That was an excess of self-devotion, Roger; our father surely, and myself, young as I was, and if we could have met, would have kept your secret for our own sakes, if not for yours.”

“ There was a chance that the honesty of family love might have betrayed us,” answered Roger, “ and I guarded against that, even though at the loss of family love for ever, or, at the least, for a long time. And now, Philip, dear, there is but one matter upon which I will try to crave your indulgence of my late unfortunate courses. I have said I was forced to return to Ireland, and it is true. And when I did return, it was not as a man of the hills and woods; a wild, unsocial, outlawed man, with hands against all men, and all men’s hands against me. No: I came the master of a little money; a little, honest, honourable money; and I took a farm, far North; stocked it, and laid myself down to work it; and, under a new name, was growing prosperous, in an humble sense, when, by an untoward chance, my hidden, though never-denied, religion, became discovered. Then I encountered unfriendliness, ill-neighbourhood, cold faces, finings, and at last imprisonment, which lost me all farming profits, made me unfriendly, in return, to law, and lawgivers, and law-upholders, and called up, I believe, a certain bold carelessness of mind in which I was born. It was an easy matter to change name again, and as easy to gain power over one of the roving bands of unsettled people who remain since the wars of James and his son-in-law; and as a Rapparee I determined to die, however it might chance, without leaving a blot upon the name of old Crana; and until this last term the thought I had treasured up for my death-pillow, was—‘ The Walshes have it yet.’ —Is little Dorcas in the country?” he asked, after a pause.

“ She is, Roger,” answered Philip;—“ But you were compelled to leave France, you say?”

“ Not France,” he answered: “ I was in Spain, and a sworn and paid subject of Spain, when the necessity for leaving it,—ay, and France, too, where I was too well-known,—happened.

I go on, Philip, telling you the very truth ; though I must needs end in a fact that, above all the passages of my ill-starred life, I fear will not make you love your brother.

"Upon my arrival in his territories, Louis gave me a commission in his armies, through interest made at St. Germain. Some short time after, I was permitted to change into the service of Spain. There I met a lady of a high family, and we loved each other—at least her high and, belike, fierce spirit, and my hot-blooded fancy would break through all bars to come together. Under my first-feigned name, I could make no pretensions to the approval of her family. We married privately, however, in Madrid—our marriage was discovered. Her friends renounced her, and commenced a persecution against me. They had influence at Court, and I was degraded from my rank in the Spanish armies. Burning with rage, I encountered one of them by chance. We fought a duel, and he fell. Then Spain became too hot for me, and France, alas. I was necessitated to fly from an arrest which would have compassed my destruction; and, now listen, Philip—a few hours before my flight, my wife died, giving birth to a child—a daughter—and I could do no more than take the wretched infant and lay it at the gate of a convent."

"What convent, Roger?" asked Philip, suddenly excited by a matter distinct from the general feeling in which they had met to converse. His brother mentioned the name of the convent, and of its superior. "Powers above!" resumed Philip, crossing himself.

"What ails you, brother?" demanded Roger.

"Your child is in this house," was Philip's answer.

Quick words ensued, in which Roger learned the story of the wretched Louise Danville, and of her coming to Ireland with Dorcas Walshe. It certainly appeared, that in all probability she was the daughter of the Baron of Crana. Still there existed, or at least lay at hand, no positive proof of the fact ; and ere she should be spoken with, or even seen, questions were to be weighed, and as Philip Walshe strongly urged, his sister more closely catechised.

"Then little Dorcas, too, is in the house, as well as in the country?" rejoined Roger.

"Not little Dorcas now, Roger," answered Philip ; "you have to embrace, for your sister, a lovely woman of good stature. I must seek her, and lead her hither."

Patrick pleaded to be allowed the office of summoning Dorcas; he thought that he could prepare her for what she had to encoun-

ter more coolly, and therefore better, than Philip could. Philip did not object; and Patrick was rising for the purpose, when his mission became futile. Almost simultaneously with terrific shrieks of more than one voice, sounding from about the distance of the entrance through the ballium into the outward court of the castle, Lady Dorcas was heard at the closed and locked door of the library, calling loudly and in agitation upon her brother Philip's name, and knocking for admission to him.

CHAPTER XXIII.

AFTER a moment of embarrassed thought, Philip Walshe went to the door, and asked his sister, without opening it, if she was alone. Dorcas replied that she was, and repeated her supplications for admission. As he turned the key in the lock, he demanded whether she knew the cause of the outcries which all heard. "No," she answered; "but I came to you for an explanation of them, and for your protection too, dear Philip, for I am sorely alarmed, and Louise Danville is not in the castle!"

He opened the door. She was stepping hastily in, when at the sight of Roger Walshe, she drew back in alarm. Philip whispered a few words to her. She uttered a suppressed scream, and stepped back again, pressing her hands together before her, raising her shoulders, and fixing her eyes on her new-found brother. Roger stood upright, at the other side of the room, his regards also dwelling on Dorcas, his cheeks pale, and a tremour running through his frame. When she did not immediately advance, he bent his head and body low, saluting her. This wretched self-prostration went to Dorcas's heart; she walked forward quickly, and in a sudden fit of tears, took both his hands in hers, and held her cheek to his lips. He, too, wept like a child.

The fearful cries rose higher outside the castle. Philip demanded Patrick's company to the top of the wall over the embattled entrance to the outward court-yard. Roger Walshe said he would accompany them, averring that he was sure the disturbance arose on his account, whatever it was; and that therefore he ought not to allow his brother, and his brother's friend, to inquire into its cause alone. Philip at first demurred,

but finally yielded, as well to Dorcas's solicitations as to Roger's, on condition that the latter should keep himself as much as possible from observation, and take no part in any parley that might go forward.

By narrow steps of stone, they all soon mounted the wall at one side of the gateway, Roger Walshe concealing himself from the notice of those below. The broad avenue to the castle swept from a great distance through the grounds up to the gateway. Green turf spread from its edges to the right and to the left. On this turf, immediately beneath the spectators upon the wall, was an old oak tree, of which the thick foliage cast a shadow over the grass, and at a first glance, many figures appeared in busy action, some within the shadow, some in the moonlight beyond its edge. The former were fastening one rope to Father James's arms, behind his back, and another rope round his neck ; and from him, as he struggled with the matchless strength of a madman, arose in part the yells which had startled our friends in the castle. Louise Danville was the principal figure of the group in the moonlight ; and her hands were held tight by two men, while she also writhed to get free, and echoed in the extreme of shrillness the cries of the priest. John Gernon stood composedly near her, watching the proceedings under the tree. All of his bold bachelors were armed, and they were five in number.

Neither Patrick nor Philip Walshe recognised Father James; this ignorance, however, could scarce lessen the consternation in which they beheld a being of such wretched appearance about to be strangled before their gate. The situation of Louise Danville farther surprised and alarmed her friends. Lady Dorcas added her own screams to the outcries below; and Philip and Patrick, in a breath, called to Gernon to account for what they saw.

The Captain of the Bachelors' company quietly turned up his head to the wall, and answered ; " All in good time : you shall soon learn our business so near your castle, genteels—just as soon as a rebel and outlaw, who will not submit to be led to justice, undergoes the punishment of his obstinacy. Up with you into the tree, Tom, and slip the rope over a branch—all else is tight enough now, and the money our own."

Lady Dorcas turned away from the sight, covering her face with her hands. Her friends were unarmed ; there was not a weapon in the castle ; to interrupt Gernon by force was therefore impossible ; and they could only continue to protest against the act, while the man whom Gernon had addressed

climbed up into the old oak, holding the end of the slackened rope between his teeth.

He disappeared among the thick foliage, his victim still struggling desperately, bound as he was, in the hands of the two other men.

"Quick, Tom," resumed John Gernon; "down with you." A sound of a human voice was heard in the tree, like a groan, interrupted by a catching of the breath, and Tom fell head foremost on the turf, and there lay without motion.

"What's the matter, lad?" questioned Gernon: "jump on your legs! Your can't?—stunned by striking your foolish head against a branch, I reckon, after letting your toe slip.—Up you, James," to one of those who held Louise Danville, "I will help to take care of the lady."

"Do not touch me, villain!" cried Louise, as he seized her wrist. "I have nothing to do with you, nor you with me—I have told you nothing—I will tell you nothing!" She had been silent since the appearance of her friends on the wall to this moment, her head dropped on her breast, and her efforts to get free abandoned.

"Do you hear her, bachelors?" asked Gernon, sneeringly; "she has told us nothing? and now she thinks, in her little fit of répentance, that we won't be her humble servants along the road to the place where she will be made to tell it all over again?"

"From this hour my lips shall never utter a word, though you torture me to the death," said Louise, in her late remorse and indeed, despair.

"And what can the young lady have told you, to warrant your present violence against her, scoundrel?" demanded Philip Walshe.

"Go on with that other business, James, and while it is a-doing I may as well amuse the grandees above on the wall," said Gernon, to his newly-appointed executioner, who accordingly strode towards the tree; then he again spoke to our friends—"She has told me what you won't half like to hear, Philip Walshe."

"Sirrah! how do you address me?" pursued the alarmed and conscious Philip—"here, at my own gate, how do you address me?"

"I crave your pardon," answered Gernon; "I forgot the mister. But, hut, tut, plain words at once. The little lady comes to this gate—no longer yours and that never has been yours—to put me in guard of the Castle of Crana, in the

name of King William and Queen Mary, to whom it is confiscated, and has been many a year, by virtue of the outlawry of your elder brother Roger, in Meath—Roger Walshe, Baron of Crana, and late Sir Randal Oge O'Hagan."

Once more screams of agony burst from Louise.

"And you will hold possession of the castle for one hour after this notice at your peril, Mr. Philip Walshe," added Gernon.—"What's to do there again?" he continued, as, to the surprise of every spectator, the second man who had ascended the tree, while John Gernon was speaking, came crashing down through the boughs, and fell heavily upon his already prostrate comrade—"Can't you try it again, no more than Tom?" He let go Louise Danville's hand, and stood over the person he now addressed—"Can't you speak either?"

"Barely," gasped his faithful bachelor—"I am stabbed in the breast."

"A volley into the tree!" ordered Gernon; and he fired his carbine, while his three remaining men managed to discharge a pistol each, two of them still holding Father James, and one Louise—"And now wait a minute," he said.

He had not to wait half a minute, when two hidden foes, badly wounded, and groaning loudly, fell in their turns at the roots of the oak, having vainly striven to cling to its boughs and branches in their descent: one was a servant of Crana castle, the other a peasant. Both held common table-knives in their hands.

"Any more of ye?" questioned Gernon, climbing up the tree himself, with the reckless and perfect bravery which was the only excellence of his character.

"Try, dearee!"—and—"Yish—an' plenties!"—the voices of John Sharpe and Rory Laherty were heard to exclaim, almost together, in the depths of the oak; the former rapidly added—"Drap yerselves on the lave o' em, my acorns!"—and a reserve of half a dozen servants and peasants jumped down upon the three bachelors, and secured without injuring them. Several new events now happened nearly at the same instant. Roger Walshe, giving no warning of his purpose to his brother, ran down the steps of the wall, and unbarred and unlocked the gate, desperation and rage in his eyes; Miles Pendergaest, attended by two riders, came, according to the promise of his letter, up the avenue; a great crashing and struggling took place in the tree, and then, forcing boughs, and even heavy branches with them, Gernon, Sharpe, and Laherty, fastened together, like three of a swarm of bees, tumbled in a lump

on the green turf, and there lay struggling, and kicking, and imprecating in their several idioms and phrases. And it was even while they thus made their appearance, that Louise Danville learned the full operation of the act of ingratitude which she had committed.

She stood free of the man who had held her, stepped out alone and conspicuously before the wall, and spoke up to its top. "Philip Walshe, look—Dorcas Walshe, look—I have repaid all your friendship with treachery, with treachery, which ruins you both—look, look!"—She held her long-treasured little poniard short, its point to her bosom. Her father had come out from the gate and was near to her; he saw her preparations for self-murder, and wrested the weapon from her hand; then, holding her round the waist with his left arm, he looked closely at it in the moonlight, and a great cry escaped him.

It was his own hands which had laid the unhappy Louise at the convent-gate. In his hurry and agitation, and in his anxiety to escape out of sight unknown, the small dagger had fallen from his girdle, and become hidden in the folds of the infant's dress. When found by the nuns, who took in the little stranger, the Superior kept it safe until the day of her conversation with Louise, of which Lady Dorcas has spoken; and then she presented it to her, as, most probably, a token by which she might, some time or other, discover her parents.

Louise's mind became seized with the belief that it must have been her father's; nor did she err in this one, at least, of her many vehement fancies.

After a few hasty words together, Roger Walshe and she turned out of view among some thickly-planted trees.

Almost immediately, Philip and Dorcas disappeared from the wall. The next moment brought the astonished and alarmed Miles Pendergast close to the oak-tree, where he saw his former land-steward and game-keeper rolling about with John Gernon, their allied efforts scarce enough to hinder him from overpowering and choking them both with his naked hands. Patrick O'Burke soon joined Pendergast, explained to him in a few words the scene which he witnessed, and then aided him in separating the only remaining combatants. One seized John Sharpe, another Rory Laherty, and Gernon bounced up a liberated man.

Pendergast's quick, just, and cautious mind immediately understood the only course which was now to be adopted. He saw that, although John Gernon was temporarily mastered, for the second time, in the legal discharge of his legal duties, it

would be but braving the vengeance of the whole statute-book absolutely to send him away with a tale of defeat and failure to his principals. He therefore strove to conciliate the determined Mayor of Bull-ring, often hindered, however, by John Sharpe.

"Ay, ye dearee,—Ay, ye mother's own rearing : and ye thought nae ane could form ae ambuscade but your ain sel' ; ye thought ye could gae flaunting it in brave swords and carbines, over-an'-hether in the wood, and never meet our ee ; yes, ye did, Johnny ; yes, pet ; and gang up to the vera gate without ae challenge ; to be sure ; why not ;" and thus Sharpe ran on, too much excited to heed, in the first instance, the severe expostulations of his old master. As for Rory Laherty, his immediate care, when he found he must no longer make battle against Gernon, was to run, whooping, to Father James, cut his bonds, and set him free ; and, like an unbound wild beast in terror, the raging madman instantly fled out of sight, escaping the immediate fate which had threatened him. He was found dead and crippled up, however, a few days afterward, in the Polh-an-Aisfrin.

But, still aided by Patrick O'Burke, Pendergast at last succeeded in keeping down John Sharpe's bitter boasting and wrathful irony, that he might parley with Gernon. And he guaranteed to the guardian of bachelors,—made confident by a whisper from Patrick, as to the intentions of Philip Walshe,—that the castle of Crana should be peaceably delivered up to King William and Queen Mary, without any farther legal process, provided that all who wished to depart from it were as peaceably permitted to go their ways from its gates. Gernon, seeing himself outnumbered as he stood, and, in fact, calculating nothing so much as the pecuniary reward for his "discovery of an unsound title," assented to the proposed terms of treaty.

Philip Walshe now addressed Mr. Pendergast, issuing through the gateway, followed by his sister, both mounted. "I thank you, sir," he said, "for saving me the trouble of settling this business ; I have overheard your parley, and I am ready with Dorcas, here, to ride off from Crana this moment."

"Whither ?" asked Pendegast, as he respectfully bowed to Dorcas Walshe, and shook Philip's hand warmly.

"I know not, faith," replied Philip, forcing a laugh—"any—the nearest road to the Irish coast, however, will serve.—The name of Walshe," he continued, in an altered voice, wringing Pendergast's hand—"the name of Walshe, Mr. Pen-

dergast, is dead—and worse than dead—disgraced, in our own country, and we are not going to stay here behind it.—Good bye, sir.—O'Burke, good b'ye."

"Tut," said Patrick, vaulting on a horse held by one of the discarded servants of Crana—"We ride together, don't we?"

"Yes," answered Pendergast, "we do;" and he turned his own roadster to gain Dorcas's side. Hitherto she had not wept at the prospect of loss of rank, country, means of existence; these words, and this action of Pendergast caused her a fit of weeping.

"Where is *he*, O'Burke?" asked Philip.

"Here I am, Philip," answered Roger, coming to his stirrup: he had stood some minutes behind them, and alone, hearing their conversation:—"And *she*—although worlds would not again drag her into your sight—or Lady Dorcas's, is kneeling down in the clump of trees, beyond, praying your pity,—if not your pardon, before we part from ye, for ever—she, my own poor unfortunate child."

"Part from us for ever?" demanded Philip—"surely we all gain the coast together—see—your horses, which I have ordered.

"Thanks, brother, kind thanks," replied Roger; "and with your leave, we will ride a little distance after ye, till danger of pursuit for the present may be thought past; but then, Philip, it is not in our minds, indeed, to live with ye, or near ye, for the future. We know our own part, and will take it."

All remonstrance was lost on Roger. He only shook his head, and repeated his arrangements. "And we are not to go by the name," he added, "and for that reason, 'tis odds if ye shall ever be shamed with as much as hearing of us.—So, a good b'ye, brother, stoop the cheek, and let me kiss you."

They exchanged the salutation which he sued for. Then he looked wistfully at his sister. She beckoned him, when he came to her horse's side, let her arms fall on his shoulders, and presented him her lips.

"Brother," she murmured immediately after; "this new part you are so bent on taking alone in the wide world—" and she hesitated.

"Will bring you no farther shame, dear sister, by Him who hears me?" he dropped on his knees, weeping and embracing her feet.

"Well—we forgive the poor, blinded Louise," resumed Dorcas; "and we will kiss her for the last time, too."

"Yes, yes—our brother's daughter," agreed Philip ;—"go for her Roger."

Roger did so, but returned to say that her remorse and shame would not permit her to appear before her uncle and aunt, although she humbly offered them her adieu, her thanks, and her contrition.

"Ride, then—and good-night Crana!" said Philip ; and he, Dorcas, Patrick, Pendergast, Rory Laherty, John Sharpe, and a band of volunteer servants and former tenants, who elected themselves into a guard against interruption on the nearest road to the coast, turned their horses' heads from the old castle. The last Baron of Crana and his ill-fated daughter followed, as Roger had stipulated, for a little way behind, but the two brothers never again met. All, however, escaped to a foreign country, where Philip soon gained a commission in an army of the enemies of his own, where Pendergast and Patrick purchased their new estate, and lived under the same roof, even after the latter was married—and married to Dorcas Walshe ; where John Sharpe, exclaiming against the barbarity of the language, and other peculiarities, had great sway as land-steward ; and where Rory Laherty, as game-keeper was tyrannised over by him.

END OF VOL I.

THE
D E N O U N C E D.

BY THE

AUTHORS OF "TALES BY THE O'HARA FAMILY.

— bright e'er the flood
Of her tears and her blood,
Let the rainbow of hope be her Wellington's name.
THOMAS MOORE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

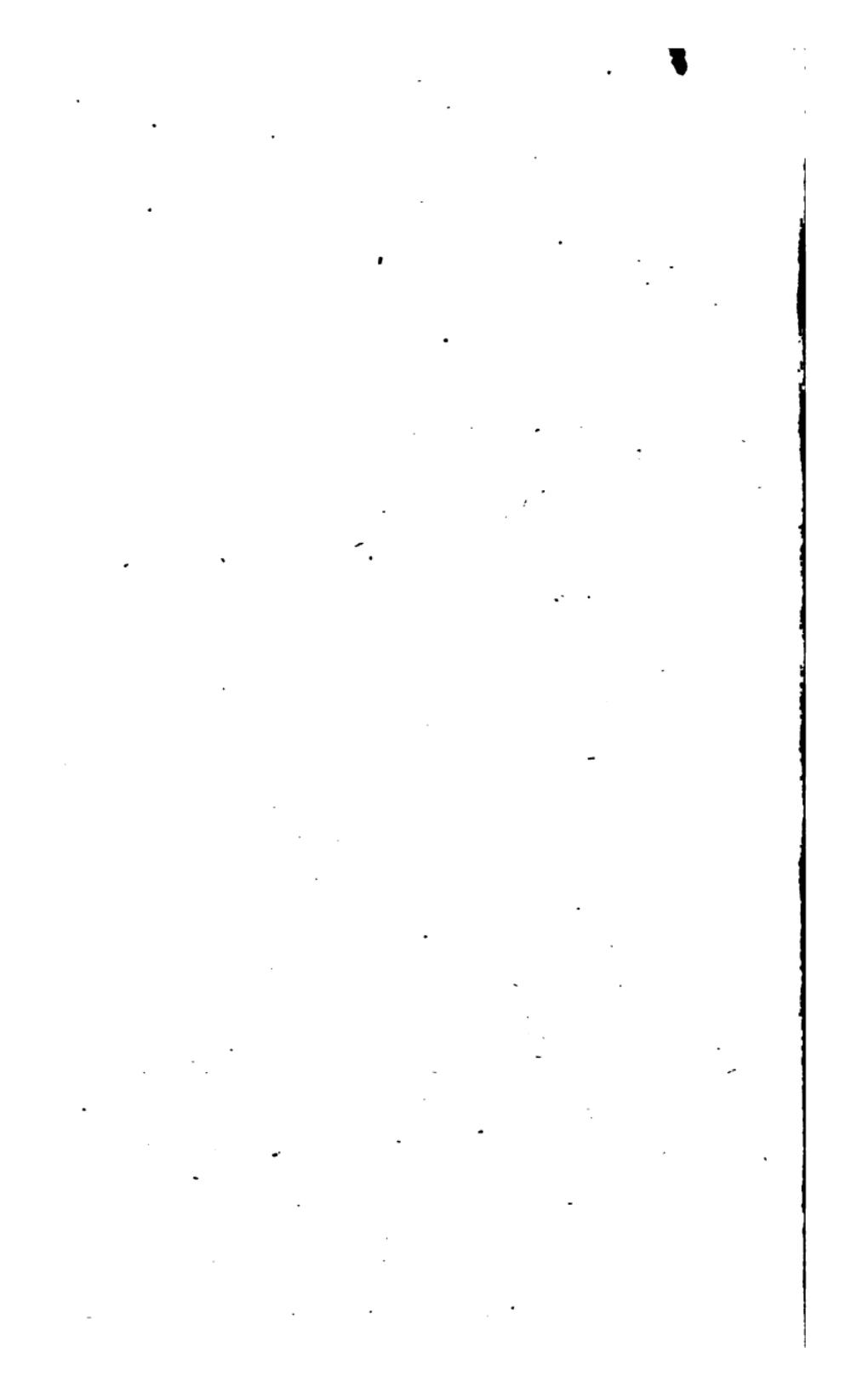
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1830.



THE CONFORMISTS.

CHAPTER I.

OLD Irish people of the present day, who remember the things of their early youth, and can gossip intelligibly about them, wonder at nothing more than at the contrast between the mode of public travelling now, and what it used to be in Ireland some sixty or seventy years ago. While tottering, supported by their sticks, along the suburb roads of their native towns, they may be seen to hurry up a convenient green-lane, or, if that is not at hand, place their shoulders against the hedge or wall of the highway, in order to allow deferential scope to the career of the stage or mail-coach heard afar off, but suspected to be close at their backs, in consequence of confused misgivings respecting the state of their own sense of hearing. In such situations as the latter, we have observed many an ancient friend, and while the stage whisked by them at the rate of nine English miles an hour, (making no more ado of four insides and twelve outsides, than if the horses were blasts of whirlwind, and itself and its tenants light clouds involved in their motion,) we fancied that, in the up-turned eyes and dropped jaws of the old gentlemen might be perceived—mastering even their terror of being run over and ground into dust—an expression of awful amazement, as if the impetuous vehicle were some superhuman wonder, boding evil to mortals in its transit over the public roads of this earth.

And we have heard described by these grandsires of our minds, the more rational public conveyances which reflected credit on the different towns of their birth, when they (and who but they?) were of the young and adventurous of a growing world. "In them days," it was thought no waste of time or

want of energy in passengers, proprietors, horses, or carriage-machinery, if the ponderous diligence accomplished a journey of sixty miles to or from the metropolis, in forty hours after its sedate departure from the starting-point. Nor did foolhardy men then commit themselves to its guidance, sure (though slow) as it was, with the indifference and the want of previous arrangement for a long journey of sixty Irish miles, which is observed in a traveller of the present day, who, at an hour's notice, and having in charge only a small valise, or the paltry novelty called a bag, and contenting himself with nodding to his friends, and jokingly kissing his wife and children, consigns life and limb to the discretion of a slight stage-coach, an opposition coachman, and four incarnate devils of half-blood horses. No ; in these good old times, weeks were allotted to due preparation for such a journey, even by the diligence. Apprehending a lack of accommodation in houses of entertainment themselves, the prudent man victualled his capacious saddle-bags with a week's provisions, at the least, paid his debts, made his will, partook of religious comforts, and in various other ways nerved his manly mind for his perilous adventure. Days before his departure, a tender gloom shaded his domestic circle ; upon the doomed morning itself, not only all the members of that circle, but a crowd of friends besides, escorted him to the side of the awful machine, and there tearful and boding embraces were interchanged. And, for present purposes it is convenient to add, upon the evening when he was expected—or rather hoped—back again, the same group proceeded miles outside the town, and took a position upon some convenient eminence, patiently watching for hours the approach of the moving house which contained among its inmates he who was most dear to them. “Upon the evening when he was hoped back again,” has been said ; for certainty in the case, or even that maturity of hope which amounts to expectation, was affected by no one, not even by the local half-proprietor who kept the sign of “the Cross Keys,” or haply of “the naked boy on the barrel,” in the main street of the town. His helpers, indeed, waiters and ostlers, and stable-boys of humbler degree, sometimes pretended to speak of a particular day, while he clothed his words in mystery ; but from their anxiety, equal to that of the friends of the poor travellers, and often visible some evenings before the actual arrival of the public conveyance, it might be inferred that a laudable wish to support the credit of the mighty vehicle, rather than conscientious conviction, prompted their tongues to augur boldly.

In the reign of George the Second, upon a hill outside a town which boasted one of these public blessings, many persons were assembled as usual, hoping to catch along the distant road a sight of what was called, by excellence, the Fly Diligence. It was late of a summer's evening, but sufficient light still remained for their purposes. They had been assembled since before three o'clock, and had now strained their eyes abroad more than an hour, but without a promise of the expected object.

The group consisted of ostlers from "The Cross Keys" in the town, as well as of expectant friends of passengers, supposed to be contained in the Diligence. The former had confidently assured the latter that the object of the interest of both would surely arrive that evening ; but, as often happened, these shuffling officials did not feel the certainty they fain would impart, and an observant eye might detect doubt, and perhaps uneasiness, under their assumed tranquillity, or through their occasional gibe and jeer, and loud laughing among each other. In truth, although, until now, they had prudently kept their mind to themselves, the familiars of the Fly Diligence had reckoned upon the appearance of their esteemed machine the evening before ; and its absence at present, long past the hour when, if to come at all, it ought to have been visible, made them really begin to fear the occurrence of some embarrassing event.

"The axle of her hind-wheels, poor creature, couldn't give way again, Tim ?" surmised one of the helpers, speaking in a whisper to his companions.

"Or her fore-wheel be slipping off again, Ned ?" said another ; "but that 's the laste likely : Mat. Huck spent two good hours over it, after the last misfort'n, an' I by his side. An' never no one seen or hard him hammer away so since the day he was a smith."

"Them late rains," resumed Ned, "they'll be softening the mud between nine-mile-house and Carra-gap afore this time, an', maybe, she's stuck in a convenient spot, boys."

"Or, maybe, brown Sal stretched a leg in the middle o' the long stage this side o' Kilcullen, like her cousin, Pol Blackberry, afore her, where there 's neither horse nor mare, for love or money, to harness in her stead," remarked a third.

"Or, maybe, she put it in the head of herself and her other three brothers and sisters to run off wid the poor Dilly," said another ; and, notwithstanding their uncomfortable misgivings, a hearty laugh from all attested the impossibility of this witty supposition.

"And how down in the mouth the poor sowl that's waiting here along wid us, are biggennin' to look!" resumed Tim, glancing towards the group who expected friends by the Diligence.

"*Torney Dooly's woman, above all," concurred Ned; "but she needn't; there's men in the world that wather won't dround, nor fire burn, nor a tumble out of a worse Dilly than the master's, hurt or harum, in regard o' the little han'ful o' something that does be growin' for 'em."

"You may say that, lad o' wax; but I wonder what brings Mistress D'Arcy here, the 'torney's ould an' early friend, when he was a bare-legged beggar's brat (an' no Protestan') in her house, an' her husband's?—who in the world can she 'spect home by the poor Dilly, wid her son Dan by her side?"

"By the powers o' Moll Kelly, I dunna, Tim; no one belongen to them went from this in the Dilly anyhow; maybe, it's one o' the daughter's of her neighbour, ould Donaven, that she's lookin' for; an' the comely *colleen* 'ud be coming from Dublin town, unknownst to us all, the way she went, maybe."

"That can't be, Ned; we'd hear of her settin' out anyhow, an' we never did."

"An' so we would, faix; an' yet, how arnest she is lookin' over the road, and bould young Dan, too, by the elbow of her, doin' the same."

"She's a grand kind of woman," continued Ned; "and had a right to be han'some in her day."

"An' not a bad heart, or a hard heart in the body of her either," agreed Tim; "for all she has that stand-off look, an' that stately way wid her, an' the black drop in her, into the bargain."

"Marryin' wid one o' the good ould stock oiled the wheels of her heart, an' made them turn so kind, lad; though I wonder Hugh D'Arcy, that gave her such a brave bit of a boy to brag of, never coaxed the Protestan' out of her at that same time."

"Mostha, so do I; only it's jist as great a wonder that *she* doesn't try to coax young Dan to the church-dour wid her, sayin' nothing of the boy, oulder nor him by a year or two, that they sent to foreign parts, for the larnin' he couldn't get at home, an' the riches, too, we hear;—but, neighbours, give an eye to the wife o' the turncoat 'torney!—See! there's the

second time she thought to make up to Madam D'Arcy, an' put the *comether* on her, wid her *curlshee*, an' her 'God save ye kindly!—an' jist look how the widow o' the ould *Roman grandeo, (Protestan' as she is her own sef,) sends her off wid one rise of her head, an' one cast of her eye, to find Micky Doolins's sq'l's among the people of all sorts that's watchin' the poor Fly along wid them."

"Ay, an' watchin' it for no use or purpose, I'm afraid, at last, boys; an' Madam D'Arcy seems of the same mind wid myself, an' so does young Dan, I'm thinkin'—yes, by the wit o' man, an' doesn't take it as kind as his mother either.—Hould, boys! by the hokies, here they are on our backs, the two o' them! an' now keep your faces, every Christian o' ye, an' the best we can, for the honour o' the Dilly."

Mrs. D'Arcy and her son approached the group of helpers. The lady's appearance justified among themselves the homely criticism of the lords of the inn-yard. She was tall; as stately as graceful in her mien and motions; and her face, although beautiful, even to a statue-like degree of beauty, showed little of the gracious play of feature which wins the hearts of the vulgar; yet it was very feminine, and, notwithstanding an expression of coldness to the general eye, very sweet withal. While she slowly advanced, the flapping of her vast hat, which reached but half-way down her lofty system, and the rustling of her stiff silk gown, open at front, over a rich quilted petticoat, well furred, and projecting, at her sides, only into an anticipated improvement of the emulative "bustle" of the present day, was awful in the eyes and ears of the conscious minions of the Fly Diligence.

"Bould young Dan," as they had called her son, also seemed to have been passingly well sketched in these few quaint words. He had not completed the legal years of manhood; was not taller than his mother, and therefore of rather low stature for his sex; but his breadth of shoulders and of breast, his muscular limbs, his measured and heavy tread, and his contracted brow, which did injustice to a large blue eye of naturally amiable expression, bespoke a manly strength and maturity of frame, and a firm, perhaps, wayward character. It may farther be remarked that, although much elevated in exterior expression above vulgarity, he by no means gave as much of the notion of a gentleman as his mother did of that of a lady. In fact, there was a homely, unintellectual air

* Roman Catholic.

about him. And if some particular cause had not this evening warped his features, young Dan D'Arcy prefers little claim to be called a gentle youth, by those, at least, who casually regard him.

It was obvious that he prepared himself to address the children of the Fly Diligence, and in no very good humour either; but his mother checked him by a pressure of her arm, and spoke instead. The lady temperately, but somewhat threateningly, demanded to know whether or not the public vehicle would, in truth and reality, arrive that evening?

The helpers had been innocently stretching their necks, and straining their eyes, in the direction of the Dublin road, and now seemed as if their attention was unexpectedly called home by the question. They answered, one and all, though in different phrases, that nothing in the world could be, to their minds, more certain than the desired event. They requested Mrs. D'Arcy—"long life to her!"—to observe how very sure they must have been on the point, when, as she might easily perceive, Tim had brought out from the town a grease-horn for the wheels, in case of need,—the few last miles to the Cross Keys being none o' the best, and an accident or two having previously happened at the turn by "Bergin's corner;" and when Ned had borrowed Mat. Huck's hammer and a few nails; and Jem provided himself with the "biggest scrap" of a rope's-end he could lay hands on, "more betoken, plenty of a geod suggaun;"* and thus they were eloquently proceeding, partly in an earnest hope of deprecating the lady's wrath, partly, as they had agreed, "for the honour of the poor Fly," and yet with an inward chuckle at the thought of hoaxing Mrs. D'Arcy, when she again interrupted them. All they had said, she observed, might well apply to their anticipations three hours ago; but now, that the winter's evening was fast falling, and the time long elapsed at which, during the short evenings, it was customary for their Diligence to come up, the lady, once for all, desired them to answer, yes or no, to her last question—Whether they would take upon themselves to advise her, and were willing to abide by the recommendation of exhorting her, delicate in health as they knew her to be, to expose herself any longer to the unwholesome night-air, in expectation of an occurrence which—she believed in heart—could not now take place till the next evening?

At this, the ingenuous sycophants of the Fly Diligence looked

* Hay-rope.

at each other, shrugged their shoulders, or touched their caps, muttered unintelligibly ; and, in fine, ventured to admit that, considering the uncertainty of human things, even when they seemed most likely of occurrence, it would be as well for Mrs. D'Arcy not to build much upon the appearance of "the Dilly," until, as she herself had hinted, the next evening ; and the men gave a good proof of their own dependence on the soundness of their minds in this matter, by scraping and bowing a good evening to her honour, God bless her ! and to Masther Dan, and then proceeding to descend the post of vain observation.

At the same moment, Mrs. D'Arcy and her son moved homeward ; the latter growling angrily at the disappointment caused to their betters by the proprietors of such trumpery Diligences ; and the crying necessity there appeared to make the cheating knaves pay dearly for their imposition on the public. A Fly, forsooth !—"Yes," Daniel D'Arcy continued, uttering bitterly an old jest—"a fly moving over a plate of treacle." During his tirade, his mother spoke no word, either to soothe or inflame his mood ; she sighed, however, often, although faintly, as she leaned on his arm down the side of the steep eminence, and Dan soon grew as silent as she was ; until, after a long pause, he asked, sighing abruptly and fervently in his turn—"but for all this, mother, will not Helen make Dora come down-stairs to us the night?"

Mrs. D'Arcy replied mildly that she believed so ; and they hastened over the road to their house, which was but a few miles from the hill they had just left.

CHAPTER II.

THE next evening was very rainy and tempestuous, and Daniel D'Arcy came alone, in consequence of the inclemency of the weather, once more to lie in wait for the arrival of the Diligence. But upon this occasion, neither he nor any of the other persons expecting friends from Dublin in it had courage to brave the elements upon the hill outside the town, but rather repaired to the Cross Keys inn, and were accommodated according to their social rank, or other considerations, with waiting-room in the private sitting apartment, in the kitchen,

or traveller's apartment, or else in the porch before the entrance door of the caravansary: from each of which positions they could reconnoitre the street.

Mrs. Doolly, the wife of Attorney Doolly, was one of the favoured few who, at the smiling invitation of Mr. Hutchinson, the landlord, had a place in the apartment of honour. Her husband, as has been hinted by the dependants upon the Fly Diligence, had conformed, many years before, to the superior ritual of which the innkeeper had always been a zealous observer; had attained, in consequence, to his profession as an attorney, and afterward to much wealth and consideration in his native town; was a chief supporter of a convivial club which, twice a-week, did good to Mr. Hutchinson's establishment; and, for all these reasons, Mrs. Doolly had a right to a place in the best waiting-room in the house.

The ancient (though not present) family importance of Daniel D'Arcy, the fact of his mother being a Cromwellian, and, above all, young Dan's sway in the town upon fair-days, induced the landlord to ask him also, "reputed Papist" as he was, to participate in the indulgence accorded to the attorney's wife. And, as a mere matter of course, to which he felt himself entitled, the young man silently followed Mr. Hutchinson to the parlour-door, and was about to enter, when, seeing Mrs. Doolly seated there before him, and about to salute him graciously, he drew back with undisguised repugnance, and a hauteur rather clumsily expressed, and muttering—"What! by the side of Micky Doolly's wife!" stamped back to the porch before the door, and leaning his shoulder against its extreme projection into the street, where the rain splashed him, there awaited, along with some of the humblest of his town-neighbours—(the wives the daughters, the brothers, or the fathers of small shopkeepers)—the long hoped-for appearance of the vehicle which was deemed freighted with so much of interest and value to all assembled.

"Pon my word!" said Mrs. Doolly, in ejaculation—"set us up, indeed!" looking to Mr. Hutchinson for encouragement in her expressions of ironical surprise, at the high airs of the younger son of a family, which was known to have lately suffered much amid the clash of politics.

"Mrs. Doolly," answered her friend's husband, seating himself by her side, while he drew in and firmly closed his lips, gravely knitting his brow, and bent his eyes on the floor—"you just see a sample of what the ould grandees used to be over us, and what they would be again, if they dared—if they

were let to go riding rough-shod through the country, with swords by their sides, and pistols in their belts, and to the mass every Sunday and Saint's-day, and to the school-house to get their pride puffed up with the larning and the Latin they used to throw at us, in the ould times."

"And so Micky says; an' it's I that b'lieve you, Misther Hutchinson, honey; avoch, yes! there's that very boy, now—sure no one could stand him, at all at all, if the schoolmasther was just let to turn his head entirely, along wid the poor family pride that's in it, of its own accord, an' the scornful snout that's on the face of him—*helatchy!** 'Micky Doolly, says he? an' so, that's the way they still think to spake of a gentleman attorney, an' a man of substance in the place?—my heavy hatred on 'em, an' all their likes!—if they go by the ould saying—'tisn't what youw ere, but what are you?—' who'd come off worse, I wonder?"

"Young Dan was ever an' always a hard-grained boy—that is, since he began to think himself a bit of a *manneen*,† but I never saw him so glum as he is this evening," remarked Mr. Hutchinson.

"An' what's the matter wid 'em all now, I wonder?" asked Mrs. Doolly—"maybe they're found out, agin, in some rebellus practices, in the teeth o' the law o' the land, sich as buyin' new grounds, or takin' new lases, under-hand, or *coshering*‡ priests, or schoolmasthers, or ishers?—ay, faix, Mr. Hutchisson!" she continued, becoining much interested, and looking important—"an', for all we know, 'tornie Doolly's journey to Dublin town, that he didn't give even my own self the secret of, was to tell on 'em, an' get the fine-money, an' maybe young Dan has the wind o' the business, an' is here on the look-out to cross Micky's palm, an' give him the *hoosh* (hush)?"

"Little likelihood a' that, Mistress Doolly; your husband showed no ill-will to the family of late, you know; he's a forgiving man, and doesn't keep up ould grudges; moreover, I don't think that if the boy abroad wanted to make friends wid your husband this evening, he'd be after doing as he done a minute agone to your husband's wife, Mrs. Doolly."

"An' it's true for you, neighbour honey," assented Mrs. Doolly, with an air of reflection—"but who in the world does he 'spect by the Dilly, then?"

* An ejaculation.

† Little man—would-be man.

‡ Entertaining, or exchanging confidence with—a statute word.

"Perhaps there may be a foreign friar or Jesuit in disguise, coming to them, by the *Fly Diligence*," answered the landlord, laying some emphasis upon the last words which described the important vehicle, of which he was part proprietor, better than Mrs. Dooly's familiar abbreviation had done.

"Maybe so," assented the attorney's lady ; and a second time she seemed mentally occupied.

"The which, Heaven forbid!" resumed the innkeeper.

"An' why so, Mistrer Hutchisson ?—that is, I mane, God forbid ! as yourself says—" Mrs. Dooly seemed rather confused, and after a pause added, as if unconsciously—" though, what harum could one poor pil-garlic of a priest do among us, I wonder?"

"Whist! the Fly Diligence is coming in!" cried the landlord, rising, as a faint cheer of boys' voices, mingled with the barking of curs, and a remote, vague rumble, which might be taken for the incipient mutters of an earthquake, seemed to justify his bold assertion. Mrs. Dooly jumped up also, with a shrill cry of joy and expectation, and saying, "Micky ! Micky, *machree!*" left the parlour : and her friend, Mistrer Hutchinson thus thought his mind upon the momentary confusion we have just remarked in the attorney's wife—"Ay; I always said it—Micky *may* be in earnest in his conforming—but there's a good lump o' the Pope in *you*, along with your good dinner, this evening, Mrs. Dooly, my dear."

Meantime, the person he apostrophized, along with all the other persons waiting for the public conveyance, became aroused into great interest and commotion. The rain and tempest had almost subsided, and many darted forth into the street, while the rest crowded together in the porch. Among the former was Dan' D'Arcy, whose late gloom and apathy gave way to an almost brilliant expression of face, and briskness of manner, as, bestriding the mid stones of the rugged street, he strained his eyes, unconsciously smiling, in the direction of the coming tumult ; and among the latter was Mrs. Dooly, whose lively solicitude for "Micky *machree!*" did not prompt her to brave the few last drops of the subsiding rain, that she might prematurely come in contact with her husband.

But even the less calculating expectants in the street saw, as yet, nothing to repay them for their earnestness. True, the shouting of boys, the barking of curs, and the almost appalling rumble, still continued to be heard, and coming still nearer too, but that was all. At length, however, appeared an *avant-courier*, in the person of the town-fool, a half-clad poor

creature who had been born silly ; and he, running and jumping towards the Cross Keys, and flourishing a stick over his head, kept crying out, " We have her at home at last ! here she is ! our own darling of a Dilly !" He was quickly followed by ragged urchins, who had met the great vehicle in the suburbs, and who, sharing in all the poor simpleton's pride of having such a wonder and blessing appended to the place of their birth, loudly echoed his triumphant ejaculations. Presently, round the abrupt turn of the street, some score mongrels came in view, prancing backward, and half squatting at every prance, without any fear of being run over, while their barking grew shriller, and what had before been a dismal rumble, now changed into a stunning, crashing noise ; and, finally, the windows dancing, and the very foundations of the houses of the street quailing as it passed, the ponderous Fly Diligence filled the eyes of its admirers. Two of the helpers whom we have previously met on the hill, trotted on, bare-headed, before the horses. These horses were in number four ; their genus expressed by the word *garron*, their coats as rough as a bear's, their ribs as visible as the untiled or unslated rafters of an old deserted house, and along with their other appellations, answering individually to the epithets of the lame, the blind, the aged, and the infirm. Ropes of hemp or of hay, indifferently, with a small remnant of leathern harness, attached them to each other, and to the ark-like building they barely moved along ; for, in truth, their jaded and nerveless trot could be rated at no more than between three and four miles an hour, notwithstanding that the self-praising smiles of the postbey, who sat on the bare back of one of the leaders, and of the supreme driver who was enthroned in the huge box-seat, told how much they were satisfied with the unusual spirit of this approach to the Cross Keys, effected by many a lash at the poor beasts, and by a still greater abundance of crack, crack, round their heads ; while a second swarm of curs assisted their endeavours by worrying the animals' fetlocks ; and a second detachment of ostlers and stable-boys attended near the fore-wheels in the same view, applying goads whenever a sly opportunity presented itself, " for the honour of the Dilly."

Every human thing must have an end, and the Fly Diligence stopped at the Cross Keys, amid the renewed cheers and barkings of the brats and curs, and the unlimited ecstasies of the town-fool. Before even the inside passengers could descend, it was necessary that the driver, or *conducteur*, should

clamber to the ground, to unlock the doors of the vehicle, of which the key was in his pocket, and that other attendants should procure a ladder. The expectant towns-people gathered around him, vociferously demanding to know if their friends were inside, or else under the awning on the top, made of sacks spread over hoops ; and to all such inquiries the imperturbable man would only smilingly answer, " Ye'll see, ye'll see," as he proceeded in his duties. Mrs. Doolly, close at his side, changed some of her interest from repeated inquiries about her husband, to a contemplation of the highly ornamented side of the Diligence, on which were depicted the Cross Keys to the life, and under them the names of the public vehicle and of its proprietors, together with " Latin itself" in yellow letters on a waving blue ribbon, to this effect, "*Paratus ad arma.*" And, " Ay, indeed ?" remarked Mrs. Doolly — " P-a-r-a-t-u-s a-t A-r-m-a-(h) ? Musha, what great news the Dilly brings us ? Why wouldn't the praties be there as well as here, or any where else ?"

While the travellers under the awning upon the roof now crept down, to be embraced and welcomed home by their joyous friends, the driver and Mr. Hutchinson simultaneously opened the two doors which gave egress to whoever might be inside. And at this moment, Mrs. Doolly stood at one door and young Dan D'Arcy at the other ; only two passengers appeared in the recesses of the interior of the machine. The attorney's wife immediately recognised her husband in the person of one of them, and shrieking her delight, held out her stout arms as he prepared to descend. Daniel D'Arcy looked hard at the second passenger, his limbs slightly trembling, and his colour coming and going. This person was closely wrapped in an ample foreign cloak, which intruded on his face, so that the young man could not at once see any features. As attorney Doolly moved to meet his wife, Daniel was farther put out, by observing that the object of his curiosity, turning still more away from him, shook hands with his fellow-traveller at parting. " It can't be he," thought Dan, " he would never do *that* ; but I'll soon know, now he comes out." Another interruption took place, however. The stranger's light sword became entangled with the lawyer's legs, just as he was about to leave the Diligence, and both gentlemen laughed good-humouredly while the accident was remedied.— " No, no," continued Daniel, " Marks it can never be ! The sword and all tells against it. My brother is wrecked crossing

the sea ! or they have stopped him on his way to us since he made the land."

Tears rushed down the lad's cheek ; he turned his head an instant to conceal them : immediately the stranger, laughing at Mr. Hutchinson's proffered ladder, jumped buoyantly upon the stones of the street, and almost at the same instant Daniel D'Arcy was smote by an open hand upon the shoulder, and chokingly pronouncing each other's names, the brothers embraced.

"Come, Dan, let us elude these curious people, and get home to my mother at once," said Marks, soon embarrassed by the gaping and intruding crowd of innkeepers, helpers, driver, passengers, their friends, the little ragged boys, and the simpleton.

"Come," assented Daniel.

"Are not our horses at hand ?" asked Marks.

Daniel smiled gloomily, as he answered, "Horses, Marks ? you forget, we must *walk* home, or else ride to our mother's door upon the backs of two garrons, worth, at a fair valuation by Micky Dooly, five shillings a-piece, and no more, according to the statute, my lad."

"Oh, I did indeed forget, Dan ; seven years in Spain, where the fools couldn't unsaddle me off my pair of jennets, ay, and off another pair, if I needed them, had put all this laughing-matter out of my head. Let us trudge then, a' God's name, since the statute says—so be it." The brothers walked, arm-in-arm, towards the country, Marks having giving directions about his luggage. "But tell me, Dan, my dear, what, under the sky, can little Micky Dooly have to do with valuing horses, or cats, or dogs, or any other thing, according to the same blessed enactment ?"

"I'm glad you ask me," said Daniel.

"And why so ?"

"Because, by-the-way, you speak of the hound, I see you didn't know your fellow-traveller."

"What, Dan, my dear boy ! was that Micky ?"

"It was ; the very Micky our father had kicked out of his scullionship in our kitchen, in his thirteenth year, for stealing silver spoons, and that you and I, then mere children, helped to set the kennel after down the avenue."

"Holy mother ! I never knew a feature of his face, nor a tone of his voice, all the way from Dublin ; and, moreover, found him a facetious travelling-companion, and, I thought, a man of some gentility of manners and appearance—nay, of

mind, too. In the name of the fiend—that is, of necromancy—how could little Micky turn into *this*?—what, who is he now?"

Daniel described the attorney's rank and character.

"And, under the same conjuration, by what road has he arrived at it?"

"Why, Marks, after being kicked out of our kitchen, he was sent to one of the new charter-schools in the next county, by a charitable Protestant gentleman; in a few years, put as writing clerk out of it—(the base-born whelp *can* write)—to old Scholes, the 'torney, in this town. Under him, learned his present trade; seduced, and then married, his daughter, with whom he got old Scholes's business after the old curmudgeon died; buried her; improved in the craft of robbing and cheating all honest men; and has lately married a second wife—Judy Rafferty, much older than he, who made powers of money of her huckster's shop, at the corner of Back-lane, yonder—first taking Jude to the church with him, to read her recantation, as himself had done (so he says, at least, but there's some talk about her not conforming in the right way, after all), because, you see, Marks, there is another law to make every attorney have a Protestant wife, and no less."

"Another law, is there, to such an effect? God bless us, Daniel, my boy, you grow quite learned in statute knowledge."

"Do I, Marks? But no matter, I won't think that you come home from ten years' pleasure in Spain, and seeing the world, and making your fortune—(though I wish it had been any other way than by buying and selling, and trucking)—and studying out all kinds of learned books in a Spanish college, to give the poor younger brother who, rather than leave our mother at home all alone by herself, stayed behind you in this accursed country, where he could neither grow wise, nor rich, nor—" (Dan's voice broke)—"happy, no matter how poor or ignorant, but only try to make up his mind to see such common wretches as Micky Dooly rise in the world, just as fast as he fell lower and lower in it."

During the latter part of this address, Marks had stood still, and looked into his brother's face, not reproachfully, but at first steadfastly, and afterward tenderly. When Dan ended, he said,

"Gibe you, Dan? I? I, Marks D'Arcy, the brother that, to his fourteenth year, loved you as well as you loved him—and *that* was as well, or better than any other two brothers ever loved, before or since? I, your old and almost only play-

fellow, boxing-mate, companion, bed-partner, to the hour I left you for a foreign land ? I—I returned home this evening to—Come, come, Dan, you didn't mean it.” And Marks, his tears flowing, seized Daniel's hands, and grasped them fervently ; and Daniel, giving way to a rough burst, returned the pressure as, averting his head, he cried, “ No, Marks, no—indeed I did not.”

“ Something lies on the boy's heart,” thought Marks ; but suppressing his thought, he proceeded aloud, in a rallying tone :—“ Tut, I knew so, man alive ; you were only afraid I did not come back to Ireland with the freight of brother's love I took out to Spain from it. But wait ; although they won't let us make money here, they can't help our getting it from Spain of our own free earning, so long as the ports are left open : or even after that, they can't come up to our mother's house, and break the lid of her strong box. And so, Dan, our mother, and you, and I shall go in finer colours, though we but walk out among 'em, than e'er a Micky Dooly of the town or neighbourhood, and——”

“ Don't speak the base upstart's name to me—don't, Marks,” interrupted Daniel.

“ Well, and I won't ; and yet Dan, you *are* a little ~~Richard~~ on the attorney, since so we must now call him. Trust me, living more at large in the world would teach you some admiration of the talents, at least the industry, and the respectable ambition, which have got him on from what he was to what he is. I have told you before, how pleasant I found his company in that tedious Diligence ; and as to the early mischance about the articles of plate in our father's house, Dan, why, we can only say that a silver spoon came ready to his hand, inasmuch as he seems to have been the very man born with a silver spoon in his mouth.”

“ He never let you know who he was along the road, Marks?” asked Dan.

“ No ; though I once appeared willing to know.”

“ Ay ; and *you* were not so close with *him*? ”

“ I certainly made no silly mystery of who and what I was.”

“ Ay !” repeated Dan, expressively.

“ And,” continued Marks, “ for that same reason, I now think higher of him than ever I did ; because, after ascertaining my name, the man, as I recollect, was even more pleasing and attentive than he had been before.”

“ And what does that prove for him ? ”

“ That he forgets and forgives, my dear Dan, to us and

ours, the sorry treatment (sorry enough, however merited) which he received at our hands, once upon a time."

"That's true, Marks. I'll try to think better of 'torney Dooly, and for your asking, if for no other reason; and, as you say, keeping here at home so much has spoiled me for looking at these turns of the world, as you look at them. Well, I can't help that—'tis home, at any rate.—Stop a bit here, Marks; would you know where you are this evening?" motioning with his hand to different sides.

The brothers had walked about a mile past the town, and now paused at Daniel's desire upon the steps of a stile which led, by a short cut, to their mother's house; for such it was still called, even by Marks, although, as the heir of the real estate of his deceased father, and of legal years to assert his claim, he had never yet dreamed of elbowing his mother from her accustomed sway over acres and mansion.

"Should I know where I am, Dan?" said Marks, as looking around he repeated his brother's words, only venturing to correct one mistake in them, which, we fear, neither the Union, nor Emancipation itself, will ever be able wholly to beguile from the speech of native Irishmen—(observe, critic—ourselves among the number.)

To the point at which they now stopped short, their road had been gradually ascending; and, as they turned to look obliquely backward, green height after green height fell from its unfenced edge, until over the last and lowest half appeared their little native town, with its spire, its superior and well-known houses, its lime-tree in the suburbs, its flour-mill, and its bolting-mill, upon the banks of the suburb stream, and its evening smoke curling up into a sky, once more clear and frosty. Beyond it stretched the well-recalled meadows, each bearing its own quaint name, and still intersected with the old familiar frame-work, upon which blankets from the bolting-mill were stretched to dry and bleach; and farther still, arose such a hill, and such a hill, crowned with this house and that house—the whole overtopped by the vividly-recalled mountain, with two peaks, between the connecting curve of which was caught a glimpse of the seemingly motionless sea.

Half tears and half laughter contended on Marks's face, as he looked; and Dan watched him, and not the landscape, smiling too. After a moment's silence, the elder brother, not changing his regards from the scene, put out his hand from his side, and caught that of the younger, and then resumed.

"Yes, the old, old place; every thing the very, very same,

although looking, I know not why, small and shrunk, and peculiar to me. See, Dan, old Phil Homes, the miller, comes out of his little low door, at the back of the flour-mill, just as he used to do ten years ago, followed by his brown dog, or one very like it, his hands in his pockets, and his coat and hat as white as ever. I'd swear 'tis he, though I can't see a feature of his face ; and now he sets on the dog to beat about for a rat among the dock-leaves and rushes at the edge of the mill-stream.—Dan, do you remember how often it was the very joy of our hearts to help to start a rat by his side, with the two terriers, Snap and Pincher ; poor Snap and Pincher ! are they alive yet, Dan ?"

" They are, Marks, though crippled with old age ; and I remember what you speak of, well."

" To be sure, you do. Why, man-alive, there's not an acre of land within sight, not a tree or bush, not a stock or stone, that we have not learned the name of, side by side, together."

" Not one, I believe, Marks."

" Ha ! ha ! Well, I do believe, Dan, in my turn, never were two such inseparables of brothers known or heard of—ay, or ever shall be, my boy, speaking of the future—what say you ?"

" I say, Marks," replied Dan, returning the hearty shake of the hand he now got, " that no earthly thing ever can—not even my own troubles—I mean my own wayward humour—ever can come between me and my love for you."

Daniel D'Arcy erred widely in his augury.

" Your troubles, my dear fellow ? What troubles that I do not know of," demanded his brother.

" I took myself up in that word, Marks, and said, my humour ; and you heard me."

" Nay, but come now, Dan, there *is* a trouble in your mind."

" No, nothing," answered Dan, glancing off.

" There *is*, there *is* ! and by the light of day, Dan, you must tell me what !—ay, for the sake of old times, and these old places we again look on together !—Eh, Dan ? do you keep your mind from me ?"

" I have nothing in it to give you, Marks—that is, nothing worth giving—I—" his lip moved—" I have only been—a fool to myself."

" Listen to me, brother. Our interests in this bad world are, and always must be, one. I am a winner so far, for you as much as for myself. Fortune, home, lot, as well as hand,

heart, and soul, are yours. Come, Dan, my dear, don't treat me as a stranger. If you have a want, it shall be supplied—a wrong to revenge, it shall be revenged. Nay, listen again, and do not be hurt with me, although it is a tender point—I know that you long for the cultivation of mind these cruel as well as silly laws would not let you acquire at home—I can assist you in that way too. Surely, they can't fine, banish, or hang one brother for opening a book by the side of another brother. Dan, I say! why, my dear boy, what's this?—out with it at once, whatever it is!—Come."

Dan had stood, drawing in, and biting almost till it bled, his under lip, his head still turned away; while Marks spoke on, plentiful tears came from his eyes; he trembled from extreme and suppressed emotion; and in answer to his brother's last appeal, he now suddenly fell on Marks's neck, kissing his cheek, and roughly embracing him. Yet still the only avowal he would make in words was, "Thank you, Marks—thank you, brother; but 'tis now no use, and indeed you can hear nothing from me; only, and I said it before, I have been a fool—a cursed, miserable fool—that's all! So come up to the house; our mother is waiting."

He left his brother's arms, and led the way in determined silence; and they gained the threshold of the house of their birth without any farther explanation. But the reader shall not be kept waiting the humour of Daniel D'Arcy, for in some of the chapters immediately following, it is proposed to anticipate the young man's confession of the cause of that grief which he locked up so closely in his heart; only, that for this purpose, his historians must be allowed to go back a little.

CHAPTER III.

THE father of Daniel and Marks, Hugh D'Arcy, was a poor man in his early days, with little to give him place in the world, excepting his near relationship to a wealthy and ancient family. The youngest of many brothers, he shared little of the estate which descended in course to the eldest, and was about to try his fortune as a volunteer in the service of some foreign prince—the common resource of Roman Catholic younger brothers in those days, after the laws had passed which totally

excluded them from a military commission at home—when fortune dropped a most unexpected favour on his head.

His mother's only brother had embraced the established religion, as much, it was hoped, through sincere conviction, as from a wish to elude the dawning perils of William's statute-book, and to keep whole and entire the considerable real estate derived from a long line of ancestors. Soon after, the conformist married, but his bed was not blessed with children; and although his change of creed had much impaired the early, affectionate intercourse between him and his still Catholic sister, he wrote to her towards the close of his life, requesting a visit from one or more of her younger sons. Two were sent, Hugh D'Arcy and another; but neither seemed to succeed in fixing their uncle's good opinion; and upon a fierce dispute arising between them and their aunt-in-law, who it was thought had good sway in her own house, the youths received an intimation to end their visit. Years elapsed after this, and the old gentleman made no advance in favour of his sister's family; but just as Hugh D'Arcy was about to take the step already mentioned, his uncle died, and to Hugh's inexpressible surprise, some weeks subsequently, a will was discovered, putting him in possession of a great sum of money, accumulated during the life-time of the late Jervis Manning, Esquire, by the old process of "levying fines and suffering recoveries" upon his estate—a sum almost sufficient, indeed, to purchase for Hugh a new property nearly equal to what his relation's had been.

This happened in the year 1703, immediately before the Act of Anne, rendering persons of Hugh's religion incapable of purchasing any manors, tenements, or hereditaments; so that it was fortunate for him that he lost no time in converting his personal property into real. Perhaps it was in some vague apprehension of the future, indeed, that his measures were taken; for only a few months had elapsed, when the pennyless younger brother, no longer dreaming of fighting his way to immortal laurels under the auspices of the French King, or of the Emperor, became the proprietor of a fertile tract of land, divided into farms well-let, and highly profitable, and accommodating him with a respectable, substantial mansion. Hugh D'Arcy was handsome, and but another short interval elapsed, until he successfully wooed the portionless youngest daughter of a Protestant neighbour, whose person, mind, and manners, more than reconciled him to her want of fortune; who sincerely loved him, and who obtained parental permission to

become his wife, only because she was poor and he was rich; her zealous father and mother fully conscious that the Roman Catholic lover—all romance of true love apart—ought to consider himself the obliged and honoured party in the negotiation. Before quitting this part of the narration, the reader is requested to bear in mind the circumstances under which Hugh D'Arcy became possessed of the means of realizing all this happiness.

Whatever might have been her parent's sentiments towards her husband's religion, Mrs. D'Arcy displayed none on that tender subject, materially calculated to embitter her household hearth. Firm in her own creed, she respected what she was bound to consider the errors and prejudices of the man she loved. A usual calculation of future contingencies took place between him and her: The girls who, it was hoped, would spring from their union, were to be Protestants; the boys, Catholics. And now arose matter really to call up her religious fervour, if it had been very excessive. No girls at all appeared, but in their stead, two boys successively; and yet Mrs. D'Arcy evinced no regret at her arrangement with her husband, nor any wish to have him reconsider it. Perhaps the pride which young mothers generally feel in displaying male-children as the results of their first accouchements, assisted her philosophy on these occasions.

But Mrs. D'Arcy soon had reason to regret that her boasted offspring were not girls. In 1709, when Marks was six years old, and Daniel four, and that their father and herself began to look about them for a fitting Catholic tutor, to lead the boys' minds out of the nursery lessons half-learned at home, it became the law of the land, that no Catholic could teach school publicly, or in a private house, or as usher to a Protestant. In this dilemma, Mrs. D'Arcy delicately hinted to her spouse the propriety of engaging a tutor of her own persuasion; but at first she met a decided refusal from Hugh, whose deeply-rooted prejudices, and, above all, fears of proselytism, took fire at the hint; and when, allowing him time to reflect, his wife induced him rationally to entertain the subject; when she pointed out the immeasurable injury threatened to their children from a want of education, and pledged her word that she herself would shield them against any supposed religious interference on the part of a Protestant tutor; when the fond father, and deeply-trusting husband, had thus been allowed his second thoughts, and finally assented to Mrs. D'Arcy's plan, another serious inconvenience arose.—No Protestant tutor—such was

the spirit of the times—could be tempted to take up his abode under the roof of a Catholic squire for the purpose of educating his Catholic children.

The anxious parents were now compelled to depend upon their own fireside resources exclusively. Mrs. D'Arcy resolved to add, day by day, to the already (for the time) respectable education she had received, and day by day impart her acquirements to her boys. Hugh also promised to do the like on his part ; but his task was the harder. An Irish younger son, one hundred and twenty years ago, particularly if he showed no extraordinary natural ambition for learning, did not often benefit much by his schoolmaster. The time of civil turmoil in which Hugh D'Arcy had spent his youth and boyhood farther helped to leave him almost illiterate ; he could indeed, after some study, pen a short epistle, very plainly written, though not as well spelt, on a solemn matter of business ; and he had a vague recollection of Latin grammar, and occasionally would spout with boyish vanity, and a doubt of his own acceptation of their meaning, some of the examples of the first rules of Syntax, such as—" *Amantium iræ amoris redintegratio est*"—and, " *Vir nulla fide—Ingenui vultus puer,*"—saying nothing of his attempting now and then to cheat his humble tenantry, as he met them at work in the fields, into a notion that he was a great scholar, by thundering out among them a language of his own invention, not unlike the—" *boskos thromuldo boskos,*" previously used to frighten the lying Parolles ; but, notwithstanding all this, it may, in truth, be asserted, that Hugh D'Arcy had never arrived at perfection in even the rudiments of learning. And, as has been premised, hence was the self-imposed task of cultivating his mind for his children's sake, at this advanced period of his life, a heavier responsibility than that incurred by his wife, from the same motive. Let it at once be added, that he never carried his affectionate resolve into effect. Business, he fondly flattered himself, kept his days occupied, and the evenings were therefore devoted to study ; but, with the evening, came the love of ease, entailed upon easy-going men like him, by the happy digestion of dinner, an arm-chair, and a flask of old wine ; and, in a word, Mrs. D'Arcy soon found herself left alone in her noble endeavours to rescue her two boys from the consequences of a law, which, especially to the mother's feelings, deserved to be called as cruel as it was odious.

While the reader's best wishes attend her efforts, he will not expect a great deal from them. At the first view, it will

appear that Marks and Daniel could only learn from their mother's instructions what an ordinary English grammar-school would have taught them ; and that, supposing them ever so amenable and industrious, they had little chance of becoming acquainted with eminent literature, scientific studies, or manly accomplishments. And of one of them, Daniel D'Arcy, we must not hope the docility and perseverance which was required fully to take advantage even of the tuition of his gentle mistress. Neither stupid nor refractory, neither disliking his book, nor deficient in love for her who put it into his hand, still the boy allowed a headlong relish for out-of-door sports to consume the hours he might better have occupied within the house. One tenant's son, some years his senior, was an enthusiastic angler, and Dan would steal out, at all risks, to follow him along the edges of the neighbouring brooks : another made kites of extraordinary stature and beauty ; a third, as Daniel grew up, was an adept in snaring rabbits ; and the wood-ranger's son proved an individual of surpassing fascinations ; so much so, that to spend a whole day out with him, nutting, or bird nest hunting, or lying stretched in the partial sunlight upon a green patch embowered in the woods, listening to his marvellous stories of fairy love, or of the feats of Finnmacoul, or perhaps of the sufferings of the natives of the district from statute law, and its local executioners, was enjoyment which Daniel could not bring himself to forego, in deference to his allotted hours of "book-task," or even to his mother's entreaties and remonstrances. It is true, he never felt perfectly happy in his stolen indulgences ; a thought of his mother's frown, or worse, of her regretful tears, always brought a pang to his heart in the very plenitude of his truantism ; nor was he callous to a conviction of acting unworthy of his rank in neglecting the opportunities for growing wiser ; and many a time, when upon returning in the twilight to his father's house, he found himself deservedly punished by coldness at the fireside, or by imprisonment in a solitary room, while his more considerate and industrious brother sat happy in his mother's smiles, and in his father's exaggerated praises, Daniel has virtuously resolved to mend his ways, and conquer his desultory propensities ; but a bright morning, and the reflux of animal vivacity, acting upon habit, almost as invariably seduced him out again into the open air by a back-door, or under ~~an~~ insufficient pretence ; and, in short, he bid fair to take a place in literary acquirement even humbler than that filled by his father, who, by the way, half-inflamed by a love of ease, half

by an ill-defined consciousness that he ought not to interfere in punishing a truant, whom, notwithstanding solemn promises, he had taken no pains to reclaim, scarcely ever exerted parental authority over Daniel's courses, or when he did, it was in a manner so furious and severe as to promise little good effect ; at the same time that Mrs. D'Arcy felt it to be injudicious, and never wished its recurrence.

Of the different conduct of the brothers in the discharge of their duties, two things are remarkable. Although Marks was the more sedulous and biddable boy, he was the more lively,—the more laughing and hilarious ; and upon all lawful occasions of sharing Daniel's sports in the fields and woods, showed a heart-and-soul relish for them, and a bounding, elastic spirit of enjoyment much beyond any thing evinced by the now professed truant himself. Next, it is to be noticed, that no sense of jealousy of the dutiful and successful Marks ; no envy of the favour in which he stood at home—and, above all, no ungenerous dislike of him, because he was mentally superior, ever stirred in Daniel's bosom to shake the brotherly love of these two boys, which, as they have been heard mutually to avow, had never been surpassed by the love of any other two. And here was visible the chasm in Daniel's character between waywardness and viciousness—between positive good and positive evil. He could not hate his brother for excelling in what he had not the virtue to attempt himself : although many of the hatreds of this world may be found to spring from a facility the contrary way.

It may even be said, that Daniel's generous feeling of inferiority to Marks increased his love for his brother—at least, exalted it in quality. Candidly admitting to his own heart, in the midst of all his infatuating idleness, that he did wrong, he was also able to admit that Marks did right ; and he esteemed his consistent fellow-student with the species of esteem he would have felt *for* himself, had he equally merited it *from* himself.

His brother's bearing towards him, personally, and upon all occasions, in his regard, through good report and evil report, farther kept alive poor Daniel's warmest affection. The truant's transgressions were ever palliated, if not vindicated by Marks : the same smiling face ever ready to welcome him home from his wanderings ; the same brotherly embrace was proffered before they fell asleep, or when they awoke, each night and morning, in the little bed common to both during the years of their earlier boyhood ; in Daniel's occasional lapses

into industry, Marks would put aside his own book to speed him triumphantly on with his task ; and sometimes,—indeed it may be said, often—when Daniel ran home from a remote haunt, after having got worsted in an imprudent contest with a host of pugnacious foes, and whispered the event to his brother, the sedulous student would fling away his book altogether, and, in more spirited resistance of parental authority than the “mitcher” had ever ventured to display, hurry off by his side to the ground of contest, burning to renew the battle for Daniel’s honour and glory. In fact, the unusual attachment of the boys, notwithstanding their obviously different character, was commented upon by all who knew them. And some peculiar proofs of this attachment even administered to the jeer of the less sensitive or more unfeeling. For instance, upon a holiday, both being free, they could not bear to lose sight of each other ; and if accidentally they did become separated, Daniel and Marks were to be encountered along the road from their house, or else in the streets of the contiguous town, each proposing to every person he met the one monotonous question of—“ Did you see Marks ?” or “ Did you see Dan ?” and never ceasing the interrogatory until they had again fallen into company.

Thus, with little variety, their lives passed on, and Marks approached his fourteenth year, and Daniel his thirteenth. Then occurred something which really propoſed a separation between them. One of their father’s elder brothers, an adventurer in early life, as he had been, was known to have found his way to Spain, and there under the protection of a cousin, previously settled in the country, to have arrived at great commercial wealth. Between this individual and Hugh D’Arcy short letters of greeting, at long intervals, had passed, since the emigration of the former ; and at last the affluent merchant wrote to Ireland, requesting his brother to send out one of his sons to his care, chiefly for the purpose of having the boy liberally educated in a land which allowed that privilege to persons of his creed ; but also in the view of enlarging his knowledge of the world, and of enabling him to add to his means of independence by honourable speculations in traffic.

At the first glance at the case, Hugh D’Arcy and his wife at once destined their truant Daniel to the good fortune proposed by his uncle. But in a future consultation, they felt that he was not fitted for the venture either in the humblest literary acquirements, or in habits, and perhaps temper and character : and they naturally disliked sending out a son of

theirs who seemed unlikely to do them credit, to please his uncle, or to succeed in the scheme proposed for the advantage of the whole family. In turning their eyes and hopes upon Marks, another demur temporarily arose. He was his father's heir, and the world might presume, not necessitated to leave his father's house for the attainment of money. But, let the loosely-judging world say what it might, the worthy couple knew to the contrary. Hugh D'Arcy was an extravagant man, though not brilliant or showy in the style of his expenditure ; he loved an open house and table, and almost every day in the year had his liking gratified ; and this, working along with easy and indolent habits, as to the real state of his rent-toll, promised to lessen the extent of his recently-purchased acres. New statutes, of surpassing wisdom, had also been enacted of late, by virtue of which his most profitable farms materially decreased in value to him, as well as to their leasehold proprietors ; and, in fact, the eldest son and heir of Hugh D'Arcy appeared, from these reasons, to stand as much in need of a timely supply of substantial money, as did the humble cadet of the family ; upon which conclusion he was sent to Spain,—a university education in that country being put forward as the sole cause of his temporary expatriation, and in his mother's breast, certainly not rating as the least motive for it.

Daniel could not remain insensible to the fact of his having lost a good chance of making his fortune, on account of his want of common education—of having lost it, in truth, by his own fault ; and yet he did not regard his brother's triumph with any invidious feelings. He appeared reflective and saddened, indeed, for days previous to Marks' departure ; but it was grief at separating from the brother of his soul which overcast him ; or, if his thoughts did revert to their relative merits, and to the advantage he had thrown away, and Marks appropriated, poor Daniel only blamed himself, and tugged at his heart to arouse it into good dispositions for the future.

Never, since the hour he could enjoy sports and exercises under the open sky, had Daniel stayed so long at a time within doors, as during the days spent by his mother and Marks in preparing for the land-journey and voyage of the latter. Speaking little, and eating little, he was contented to stand in a corner of the room, remote from their bustle, his large, powerful blue eyes watching every movement of the two beings most dear to him ; or when they went into another room, he would sadly follow after ; and if mother or brother, turning quickly, surprised him in silent tears, the moody Daniel smiled

and walked away. The night before the eventful morning of Marks' departure, their mother stole into the boys' room at an early hour, to note how they slept ;—they were awake, crying in each other's arms. She kissed them in her own not unhappy tears, and bidding them take repose, left them ; returned from her own chamber towards morning, and then found Marks in a deep and exhausted slumber, while Daniel still lay broad awake, and still weeping, with his arm round his brother's neck, but doing his utmost to smother his sobs, that he might not disturb the sleeper.

Hugh D'Arcy was to accompany his eldest son to Dublin ; there, a friend had engaged to introduce him to the captain of a vessel prepared to sail for a Spanish port. It had not been arranged that Daniel should also see Marks as far as Dublin, and he put in no claim for the indulgence. The hired carriage and horses stood at the door. Marks, greatly agitated, knelt for his mother's blessing. He received it in a fervid embrace, and, still half-kneeling, turned with out-stretched arms to Daniel ; and Daniel flew to him, but it was not to bid him farewell. "No, Marks, no ! no !" he cried, in a startling burst of grief, as he dragged him off his knees ;—"no ! no !" —stamping impatiently and furiously, "time enough in Dublin ! —time enough in Dublin !" Father and mother remonstrated, and the former hurried Marks along to the carriage : but the now thoroughly-aroused Daniel would carry his point. Darting forward, he clung to the wheels of the vehicle with a desperation and a despotic clamour that nothing but cruel force could overcome ; and finally, the young tyrant, all unprovided and unclad for a journey, sat in the carriage by his brother, holding him tight, on their way to Dublin.

CHAPTER IV.

THE last words which Marks D'Arcy addressed to his brother, as they parted at the water's edge, were,—“Daniel, mind your book now for our mother ; she will have only you to teach ;” and the sorrowing and remorseful Daniel returned home with his father, determined to do wonders in furtherance of the advice. And for a long time he was indeed a persevering student ; but he had now to contend not only with old

predilections for fields, and streams, and woods, and idle liberty, but with an inaptness to commit to memory, to comprehend, and, above all, to like his tasks, which contrary habits of mind had begun to fix in him. His mother perceived this, and at first redoubled her zeal to regenerate his mental powers; but finally confessed to herself, with a sigh, how hopeless was her endeavour.

The pupil, always shrewd and observant, but most so upon subjects in which his heart was concerned, suspected her forebodings, and felt accordingly discouraged. A gloom came over his spirit, cast forth by his conscientious self-reproach of his former misdoings, and by a despair of ever being able to remedy their bad effects upon his capabilities for learning; and he felt the beginning of the greatest curse entailed by "idlesse" and abuse of opportunity at any age,—namely, the dark and wrongheaded conviction, that he was doomed to failure in all pursuits of excellence—doomed to it even in his own want of will to act upon his own abundant power.

Still for more than a year, poor Daniel sat docilely at his mother's side, or fixed in the seat she had pointed out as his place of study, until her return to hear him say his task; never weeping over the disheartening prepossessions of his mind in her presence; humble under her rebuke; galled to the soul's quick that he should still merit it; and all for love of her and of his brother Marks. He would have given worlds to recall the past, or to make the present and the future profitable for their dear, dear sakes, and that he might be worthy of being their son and their brother, and of being loved by them as they were loved by him. Sometimes, when he did momentarily succeed in pleasing his mother and himself, and when, although her manner was never chilling or too severe, she gave him unusual praise, Daniel would move his seat closer to her's, put out his left hand to receive her hand, and with his right holding down the book, hang his head to hide the crimsoning joy of his face, and the bursting tears, until, despite his precautions, the mother saw them dropping on his fingers, and then her quick embrace and kiss, and her murmured blessing of love and pity—and above all, her hasty retreat from the room—left him a very happy creature.

The poor boy deserved greater success than he attained, for his brave efforts to curb a wayward nature and keep down habitual longings, at this period of his life. The sun of spring or of summer, quivering into the window of his little study through broken screens, of green leaves, and smiling him out

to well-known haunts, and to the sports which made them memorable ; the brisk twitter of small birds, near the casement, or the steady flight of greater ones, caught passing across the square bit of blue sky framed by its dimensions ; the bubble of the brook, heard afar off ; the cooing of the wood-pigeons in the recesses of their leafy home ; the too-familiar whoop and shout of his old fellow-truant, the wood-ranger's son, set up as much to wile him abroad, as for any legitimate purpose of his calling ; all these were sore temptations to Daniel ; yet, for a season he overcame them ; and (although sometimes with a froward fit of tears) turned his back upon the window, stopped his ears with his thumbs, and fixed his eyes on the page over which his spirit had no mastery.

But Daniel D'Arcy gained his fifteenth year, and could not yet read distinctly, and in the art of writing was still excelled by his father. Upon one occasion he made a great, though ultimately, a vague and vain effort, to wield his pen. Marks wrote him a long letter from Spain. It was read to him by his mother, and then given into his possession. For many succeeding days he did not go out during his allotted hours of play, but locked himself into his sleeping chamber ; and when Mrs. D'Arcy was able to solve the mystery of his conduct, she found that he had employed himself in trying to copy his brother's epistle, imitating elaborately every turn of every letter, but so clumsily withal, that at a glance it was evident that mind had not presided over the task.

In the course of the next year his tutorress became ill, and his regular lessons, such as they had been, were interrupted in consequence. When she could leave her bed and sit up, she was still too languid to call him to her side. Hopelessness of his success also helped to wean her former energy and zeal from its object ; and this Daniel still saw, and still without reproach of any one but himself. The only increased bad result to his mind and heart was a deepening over them of the shadow of self-distrust, self-disrespect, and a belief of foredoomed infelicity. And now, when fears for his mother's life had subsided, he gradually fell into all his old habits, under new modifications. His sports abroad took a manly character, so far as the law permitted him to indulge in them ; for it will be noticed, that no person of Daniel's creed could at this time keep a horse fit for the hunting field, or carry fire-arms to bring down a bird. The wood-ranger's son became re-chosen as his trusty companion—and here Daniel must not be accused of the mean propensity which would lead him to select an inferior

crony, when he might have adopted or induced the friendship of an equal ; for, in truth, no lads of his own rank were sufficiently near in his neighbourhood to permit of a choice ; and, as his father could not keep a carriage, for the same reason that he could not go hunting and fowling, remote visiting was out of the question.

The youth so often spoken of, the wood-ranger's son, may be suspected of disingenuous views in devoting himself to Daniel. Mrs. D'Arcy often was at a loss to account for the sudden waste of her son's pocket-money ; and though Dan would confess nothing, she believed the individual alluded to could give her full information on the subject. She made inquiries into the character of Dinny, the lad's name, and found it of a doubtful kind. He was fast rising in fame at fairs and patterns, as also at the "*sheebeen-house*," or ale-house, at the roadside ; and a confidential scout once hinted to her that Dan D'Arcy had been seen entering the latter mentioned haunt by his side, in the dark of the evening.

This roused all the fears of the mother and the lady ; and the next evening upon which Daniel absented himself from home, she took her husband's arm, and walked in the direction of the place of ill-resort, determined to confront and confound her unhappy son, should she see him issue forth across its threshold. Such a demonstration of his misdoings was not, however, preparing for her ; although she stumbled on another scarce less grievous.

The husband and she had not walked many steps from their house, when her toe touched something on the ground ; she stooped, and picked up a parcel, having for its cover certain written paper which she knew to have been in Daniel's possession. She opened it, and found huddled together, rolls of gay ribands, a flaming silk neck-handkerchief, of the kind then worn by young females, and some paltry trinkets.

"These, Mr. D'Arcy," said the penetrating lady to her spouse, "are loose love-gifts, purchased by Daniel at the last fair, for some low creature—some designing low creature—brought under the wretched boy's notice by that still more designing knave, Dennis Haggerty : and, believe me, he left the house this evening to present them to her, though here he has dropped them, in his guilty hurry."

"What, Madam D'Arcy !!" answered her husband, jollily, "our Daniel a love-maker so soon ? The young jackanapes ! 'tis an early notion."

"For shame, Hugh," resumed the lady, "to treat so lightly what may be the boy's first step to degradation and ruin."

"Degradation! tilly-vally, dame: the boy is a boy, you know, not a sheep-faced girl; look at me, his father, that now hold an honoured place at your virtuous side; am I degraded? am I ruined? and yet, my dear, at his age—ay, even at his age, if not before it—for human creatures are human creatures, you see, and truth may out at last—"

"Your pardon, husband, there is no necessity that it should.—Oh, the poor, lost Daniel! Would to Heaven our dear Marks were at home to advise and guide him from such courses."

"Ay, my dear, all would be right then; no fear of your Miss Molly ever vexing us this way, I warrant you."

The conversation was turned by Mrs. D'Arcy proposing to pursue the path through the outskirts of a near wood, in order to get within prudent view of the public-house, and watch, unseen, the expected entrance or exit of Daniel into, or out of, a place so ill-suited to his years and rank in the world. Hugh D'Arcy assented with "hearty good-will," declaring himself fully willing to flog his son home from the door-stone, in case an opportunity should occur; for this, indeed, supposed an offence which came within his comprehension; particularly as—to use his own words—"the young disgrace of his family had no need to darken the door of a sheebeen-house, when it was only ask and have, in a genteel, snug way, with his own father, at his own fireside."

The anxious couple accordingly walked along the path which wound through the borders of the wood. It was a fine May evening—the evening, indeed, of the first day of May, upon which, from morning to night, syllabub, of a peculiar Irish admixture, was, and (though not so generally) still is, quaffed in the open air, upon a hill-side, or in a fair sequestered meadow, or in a grove, wood, or plantation, throughout Ireland. Mr. and Mrs. D'Arcy had not proceeded far between the stems of the trees, which budded freshly and tenderly over their heads, when from some near retreat, a little farther into the seclusions of the wood, they heard young voices, male and female, in joyous conversation and loud laughter; and it struck upon the lady's heart that the cadences of one of the party were those of Daniel. Communicating her suspicions to her spouse, he agreed, with a gleeish smile very far from his wife's feelings or purpose, to tread cautiously in the direction of the

voices, and, if possible, note unperceived the individuals who sent them forth.

Before gaining any point from which an observation could be made, both became assured that their son was one of the yet hidden rioters ; his tones seemed raised in rather boisterous, though merry expostulation, with an affectedly coy female companion ; and one might suppose, while he insisted, and jeered, and remonstrated, and petitioned, and while she repulsed, and laughed, and mocked at him in her turn, that the young pair did not sit far asunder, or sit very quietly either. Meantime, they could not be quite *tête-à-tête*, for two other voices, at the least, were heard similarly intonated and occupied, and both clamours came from the same spot.

The worthy couple had stopped unconsciously, though somewhat invidiously, to listen, when—"D' you hear that, Madam D'Arcy ?" demanded Hugh, in a whisper, laying his hand on his wife's arm, and looking with mock alarm into her eyes.

"What ?" asked Mrs. D'Arcy, though she did not require to ask.

"Something as like the sound—(or it used to be when I went to school)—of four lips, and right young ones too, meeting and parting of a sudden, as ever I heard in my life," answered Hugh.

"Poh, my dear, let us avoid these young people, however they may be employed," resumed the good lady, now understanding her husband's untimely and, she felt, unworthy humour, just as a loud peal of laughter, succeeded to a previous break, only interrupted by the sound spoken of by his father, in Daniel's very unusual volubility, and still more unusual hilarity. And as she stepped on to leave the wood without farther scrutiny—for now she felt the delicate disinclination of a parent and a lady to overwhelm her child with a consciousness of her knowledge of his indiscretion—an unexpected gap in the brushwood allowed her, unnoticed by the young truants, to assure her eyes that "the scapegrace," as his father called him, was indeed enjoying himself by the side of a pretty sunburnt girl, (almost a child, indeed,) known to Mrs. D'Arcy as the sister of Dinny Haggerty ; while Dinny himself sat at a little distance on the matted grass, equally attentive to a young female of more advanced years than Daniel's holiday divinity. And at a second hasty glance, the afflicted mother could easily account for the remarkable vivacity and boisterousness of her characteristically sombre Daniel ;—noggins, half full of syl-

labub, lay at the feet of the May-day revellers, and under the spell of the potent beverage, he was half intoxicated.

"This, indeed, must be looked after," said Mrs. D'Arcy, as she and her spouse now shaped their course back again to the house.

"Buzz, darling! let the poor mump of a boy alone," counselled Hugh. "God knows, and we know, it's seldom he has such a play-hour; and it will do him good, madam D'Arcy, instead of harm. Wait till you see how sweet-tempered he'll begin to look, from to-morrow morning, out."

"My dear husband," insisted Mrs. D'Arcy, "to say nothing of my right, as a lady, to regard this matter differently from you, let me inform you why both of us should consider it seriously. Here is a new fold of the budding of Daniel's nature displaying itself stealthily, away from our observation, out of the climate and atmosphere of home, and carrying a show, as if it shrank from the notice, not to say the approval, of our eyes; which, on the contrary, had the boy's heart and habits been sound, ought not, and doubtless, in proper season and circumstances, would not have made him feel a fear of being observed."

"And that's true," concurred her spouse, who never differed long from his lady, when once she sat her mind against his, and expressed it in the kind of exalted language usual with her, and of which her last speech is an instance.

"Wherefore," she continued, "admitting for shortness's sake, (though my heart does not and never can really admit it,) your notion of the present harmlessness of Daniel's pastime"—(Hugh smiled at the word)—"indiscretion," pursued his lady, taking herself up, "we must guard, nevertheless, Mr. D'Arcy, against its future chances, when momentary folly may become habitual liking, and the honour and dignity of two ancient families be sacrificed thereto.—You agree, my dear?"

"By all means, darling of the world; only, how are we to guard against all that misfortune you have described in such beautiful speech? I don't think a book will do it, now, at least, by reason it never did it before—barring a book that he can stick a pin into, between the leaves, with his shut up, and cry, 'one, two, or three, and a purty picture!'"

"My love," pursued Mrs. D'Arcy, "I grant, in my turn, that something like the interest which now takes the poor boy out of doors, must meet him within doors, sanctioned by paternal tolerance and approval."

"What, Madam D'Arcy? would you hire little Jinny Haggerty as one of the house-women!"

"Hugh, Hugh!" remonstrated the lady, in a half-offended tone, "when will you keep your thoughts running within bounds? I pray you, note me well. The lad shall meet female companions at home, but female companions of his own rank and quality."

"Beautiful, my dear!—elegant!—the right, motherly, Christian thing;—and where will you come by them, the little pets? I never heard any thing of the kind in our neighbourhood."

"Mr. Donovan, your new neighbour, my dear, a gentleman of your own persuasion, who came a visiting to us yesterday—"

"Yes, dear; and who left the black North, because people of another persuasion made it too hot to hold him," interrupted her husband.

"No matter," resumed Mrs. D'Arcy; "he has two daughters; I saw them when you allowed me to go alone to welcome Mr. Donovan to our neighbourhood, and they shall come over to the house, with your consent; and I know a reason why they may be tempted to come often."

Hugh D'Arcy fully consented, and his wife took her resolution,—one fraught with disasters and sufferings to her family.

CHAPTER V.

MRS. D'ARCY was right in believing that Daniel made too free with the syllabub before she and her husband came upon his revel-hall in the wood; and it must be confessed that, after her unobserved retreat homeward, he quaffed still another noggin-full. In fact, it was rather late at night when his mother heard his irregular and cowardly knock at a back-door; and then, stepping between the servants and their duty, she let him in with her own hand, confronted him silently, and not severely, inside the threshold, where, with a wretchedly pale face, rolling eyes, swimming head, and wavering limbs, he stood gazing at her; lighted him up to his bed-chamber, occasionally assisting him as he reeled from side to side; and after he had sunk in a chair, presented him with his-lost-and-found bundle of love-gifts, merely saying—

"I am glad I stumbled on them, Daniel, for the sake of

whatever worthy object you intended should win and wear them—Good-night, my son, and God bless you!” and left him.

In a few seconds she stole back softly to his door to note the effect of her treatment upon him. So far as she could judge, it was as she had anticipated. All the while she had been in his presence, he did not attempt to utter a word, or even to meet her eye, after their first mute encounter at the back-door. Now, giving vent to some startling imprecations against the parcel she had handed him, against Jenny Haggerty, and against himself, she heard him dash the tale-telling love-tokens against the floor, start up, stamp over them again and again, and finally tear them to pieces with—his mother believed—his teeth as well as his hands. Then he sank once more in his chair; grew silent; and after a long interval, burst into loud sobs, after pronouncing her name tenderly, and self-reproachingly. His mind changing, he suddenly flung himself on his knees, but muttering—“No, no—not yet—I’m not fit yet—” slowly arose; walked to his dressing-table, as steadily as was possible; bathed his face; strode back to the end of his bed; knelt a second time, and began to pray in a loud tone, accusing himself, and promising largely for the future; and it was evident that he now thought himself quite sober enough to go through his devotions, although his mother concluded very differently from his whole mode of engaging in them. Finally he got up, and prepared for bed, taking a long time to perform the task of undressing; and when Mrs. D’Arcy stepped into the chamber to see that all was safe, as soon as he gave proofs of being sound asleep, she found that each article of his dress had been carefully and methodically put away, for the first time in his life, doubtless to prepare conviction for himself against morning, that he had not been so very much overcome; although at the same time he had forgotten to extinguish his candle, or even to place it out of imminent danger of setting the house on fire.

Daniel awoke at an unusually late hour next morning. The position of the matured sunshine on the wall of the room told him that he had over-slept himself. The next moment, his mind rolled back upon him a sickening, appalling tide of recollections, and the still unsubdued syllabub added its physical commotion of head and stomach. Daniel D’Arcy was already punished as he deserved.

Within the next hour he was descending to the parlour, with a slow and conscious step, having first gathered up every scrap

of the fragments of Jinny Haggerty's intercepted present, and hid them in his breast, until a convenient moment should occur to consign them to destruction. Entering the apartment, after a pause of hesitation, which to his proud spirit was anguish, he found himself alone. Breakfast for one person was set out on a side-table. He summoned a servant, and inquired after his father and mother. His father was walking about the pleasure-ground ; his mother had gone out, many hours ago, after the usual time of breakfast.

" Many hours ago !—" groaned Daniel, sitting down to his solitary meal. Upon what business was his mother absent ? —he again asked. The servant did not know. Had she gone towards the town ?—No—but in what other direction could not be stated to him.

The servant retired, and Daniel looked at the cold meat, the remains of a pasty, and the flagon of ale destined for his breakfast, but stood up, overcome by nausea, and unable to eat a mouthful ; and he felt what an unnatural, what a disgusting thing it was, to see a young healthy lad, like him, turning from his usual and necessary meal, at a late hour, upon that sparkling May morning.

He walked to an open window. His father crossed it ; recognised him ; stopt ; and putting in his head, spoke as follows :—" So, you scapegrace ; you come home disguised in syllabub, last night : mark what I tell you ; if ever I find you doing so again—if ever you forget yourself so far as to drink liquor of any kind with low people, *out of* your own house, when you can drink the best, and plenty of it, every night of your life, with your equals, at *home* in your own house—by the hand of my body ! I'll disown you for your father's and, mother's son, and turn you out to herd with the company you like best—" and, after flourishing his stick, the incensed parent walked away.

This little disturbed Daniel ; nay, it partially relieved him, for he knew that, so far as his father's wrath was to be feared, it had now passed off. But he had slight awe of wrath of such a kind at any time, and at present it weighed nought. It was his mother he dreaded to meet. Her dignified resentment for an outrage committed against her love, her cares, her tastes, arose, in prospect, with a power to which he quailed : and yet his own love for her had most to do in the feeling. Again and again he asked himself whither had she gone ? and, each time, with a vague foreboding that her abrupt and unaccountable absence would prove connected with her anger to-

wards him, and with some terrible though fitting punishment for his unendurable offence.

Unconsciously prompted to dispose himself decorously and humbly for her return, whatever it might produce, he stole back to his bed-chamber, and allowing Mrs. D'Arcy's confidential maid to see him retire, loaded with books, there sat down, and very vainly laboured to fix his mind in study. Dinner-hour drew on, and he heard his mother enter the house, talking cheerily with some strangers who accompanied her. Curiosity now began to relieve the monotony of his fears and remorse. An unusual bustle arose in the house, as if of preparations for hospitably entertaining the unknown visitors. His interest increased: he set his door ajar, and listened. Presently a peal of merry laughter reached him from the drawing-room,—the laughter of young, female voices. He stept out of his chamber, impulsively hurrying to present himself to the company; but the sincere consciousness of not meriting to join his mother and her friends, until he should have previously knelt at her feet, and received her pardon, checked him, and he re-entered his solitary room.

Some time after, a slow step approached his door. He settled himself studiously in his chair, rested his temples on his clenched hands, and assumed all the outward symptoms of deep attention to his book. The door was slowly pushed open; he prepared himself for the worst; it was only his mother's maid bearing him his dinner, and the girl's cautious movements had been the result of her care of the load she carried in her hands.

"I am not to dine below then, Nancy?" he demanded, in a subdued tone.

Nancy supposed not, inasmuch as his mother had ordered his dinner to be prepared, and taken up to him, that the servants might be left free to attend to the getting ready "the real dinner for Mr. Donovan and his two lilly-fair daughters, the handsomest pair of young quality" Nancy had ever set an eye upon.

"Very well," Daniel said, stung to the quick—the punishment was growing too much for his nature,—"and now, Nancy, take yourself down stairs again," he muttered, in a sulky tone, "and that hodge-podge along with you—I want no dinner to-day."

"Masther Dan, a-vourneen, think of what you're bidding me do," expostulated Nancy. "You know this is not the way to come over the mother, and the mother that loves you

too, for all she puts on, to make you sorry for last night's doings."

"I am sorry already," answered Dan, a little touched, and convinced.

"I'll go bail you are, Masther Dan; for its not in your heart to be any thing else—only you have a right to the sorrow for a start, your mother thinks, and so I think too, that ever and always was your friend, and had the good word for you, agin the whole house, now and then; not in regard o' the sup o' syllabub, that the best of us might happen to take of an odd time, barring that you're hardly enough of a man yet to be getting that a-way, as men do; but och, Masther Dan, honey, it's that young *sthreel*, Jinny Haggerty, that's the worst o' the business! a creature of her poor way o' life, and your infarior twenty thousand times over, and no more nor a little minx of a child into the bargain. Fie, for shame, Masther Dan!" continued Nancy, who was a well-favoured girl of twenty, and who perhaps had a vague notion that it would have been a much more decorous thing if her young master had tried his incipient gallantry upon a comely maid-servant of about that age.

"Well, Nancy, and sure 'twas less harm in a little boy, like me, to play push-pin for kisses, with a little girl like Jinny, than, as you say, to be setting myself up for a man before my time, by the side of a great big woman?"

"Great big woman, Masther Dan! who talks of a great big woman? isn't there a madium in all things? And I tell you once again, there wouldn't be half as much scandle, so there wouldn't, if your early notions fixed themselves on a 'sponsible colleen, of years to put you right when you'd be for going astray, and taching you how to behave yourself in time."

"Wouldn't there, Nancy?" asked Daniel, rising,—his sulky humour now wiled away.

"No, and in troth there wouldn't. Aisy now, sir, I bid you!" as Dan made a chivalrous jump to her neck. "Musha, may I never die in sin, but if you go for to go on with any of your Jinny Haggerty ways with me, I'll ____." Nancy's speech was for an instant interrupted—"Well, now," she continued, standing in feigned amazement and anger, while he retired to his seat, smiling gloomily—"Holy death to me, Masther Dan, but you're the bouldest bit of a *garcoon* ever came to your years, any how; and it's in my mind to tell your mother as much this blessed day, if you don't mind your manners, instead

of my going to heap story on story, to make her believe, poor lady, that you're such a great pinitent in your room here."

" You wouldn't do me so bad a turn as that, I'm sure, Nancy."

" Don't be too sure, sir ; but will you ate your good dinner now, and not be wasting yourself to a notamy, jest for spite agin us all ? To say nothing o' vexing the mistress entirely, by bidding me take it down stairs.—Come, Masther Dan, ate ; sure, its the first morsel 'ill enter your mouth to-day, poor gar-coon."

" Well, and I will, Nancy, only you must do one thing for me . . ."

" And what 'ud that be, Masther Dan ?" stepping back in affected precaution. But Dan was not now thinking of her.

" Say another good word for me to my mother, Nance, and tell her I am sorry to death, and send my petition to see her ; because I wont go down till she forgives me—not out of spite, Nancy, but out of duty to her."

" To be sure I will, sir, and glad to say or do any thing for your sake,—for my mistress's I mane, and your's along with it."

" Thank'ee, Nance ; and so, Mr. Donovan has two such handsome daughters, you tell me ?"

" Am I to say that to your mother, into the bargain, Masther Dan ?"

" Not for the world wide, Nance ; and I guess what you're beginning to laugh at me for ; but, indeed, Nance, I long to make friends with my mother, as much as to go down and see her new beauties."

" Make haste with your dinner then, and I'll do what I can for you ; and stay quiet in your chair now, Masther Dan, and let me go paceably out o'the room."

Again Daniel entertained no notions derogatory to the assumed prudery of Nance, but her superfluous exhortations hinted to him a repetition of a former offence, and ere she could or would gain the door, his arms were a second time round her neck, and a preliminary little struggle engaged in, when the door opened, and Mrs. D'Arcy stood on its threshold.

With a self-exorcising shriek, Nancy flew down stairs.—Daniel remained motionless, overwhelmed with confusion, and somewhat dogged, as was the way of his nature when confronted in even what he knew to be a heinous fault.

" So, Daniel," began his mother, after a severe pause, during which her eyes dwelt on him ; " great as was the cause of my

anger against you, last night, you see me here, anticipating my own resolutions, in the hope of finding you fitly prepared to accept my forgiveness—and is it thus I find you, after all?—Not content with your shameful pastimes in the wood, yester-evening, and still in disgrace on their account, you begin, sir, do you, to wanton away the time of the most discreet serving-maiden under your mother's roof?"

Daniel muttered something, of which "very sorry"—"unfortunate boy"—(meaning himself)—were the only audible phrases.

"Unfortunate boy, indeed!" repeated Mrs D'Arcy, turning off.

"Mother, mother," cried Dan, "and won't you let me kneel down, now, and say you forgive me, as you meant to say, when you came up stairs?"

"This new offence cannot be so soon overlooked, sir," she answered, still retiring.

"D——n then!" exclaimed Daniel pushing his chair about the room, "and the curse that is on me stick to me, since I am so hardly treated!—not to be let to be sorry, when I *am* sorry! and kept in this room from the first visitors of my own age, and my equals, that ever came to the moping old house! —D——n, I say!"—and again he pushed his chair about.

His mother walked back into the chamber, shocked at the most violent proof he had ever given of a temper which, however, according to common phraseology, she knew to be "very near him." Her absolute presence checked Dan's fury; indeed, he would not have given way to it had she been previously in the room, nor yet, so wayward is the human bosom, had she been quite out of hearing: and now he stood leaning his forehead to the wall, and sobbed passionately.

"Look at me, Daniel," said Mrs. D'Arcy; and when he had obeyed her command, he saw tears burst from her eyes, "least of all can you conquer me by these unworthy fits."

"They are unworthy, dear mother—they are!—they are!" he interrupted her, falling on his knees.

Now occurred an instance of the only way in which Mrs. D'Arcy wanted judgment in managing her moody son. Such a mind as Daniel's had certainly required to be mastered, on this occasion, with firmness and an alienation of confidence, and, so far, the lady acted well. But his heart also demanded an instantaneous return of tenderness, in acknowledgment of the present good feeling it evinced; and this she refused him, and thereby erred. The impulse of the mother's love sent, in-

deed, words to her lips for utterance, and half-moved her arms to encircle his neck ; but her lofty notions of propriety, her faith in methodical instruction, and, above all, at this moment, perhaps, her rigid pursuance of a plan, to the forming of which she had dedicated her thoughts of the previous night, and her actions, the whole day, sealed up her lips ere the words could assume a shape, and caused her to fold her arms under her bosom, instead of extending them to raise and caress the humbled offender.

At the same time, her answer to his appeal was, "I rejoice to see you in that attitude, Daniel ; it will do you good ; and when I think you are truly the better of it, reckon upon my again visiting you here : meantime, I must endeavour to entertain, alone, the young friends who have come to see us :" and she finally withdrew.

The black clouds of his character rolled over the fresh burst, the showery sunshine, which it had so recently made. Remorse, neglected and thrown back upon him, began to change into hardened carelessness ; tender yearnings, into indifference ; for the first time in his life, Daniel began to question his mother's amiability ; and in proportion as the object of his love was in danger of seeming less lovely to him, he was of course in danger of loving his mother the less. And from this little moment may be dated much of the misery which he brought down on his mother's head, although, in truth, his heart never closed against her.

After Mrs. D'Arcy's departure, he remained some time motionless on his knees, his tears dried up, and his sobs repressed, and when he arose, it was but to cast himself doggedly on his bed, where he tossed for hours, revolving nothing, and arriving at no fixed feeling. Suddenly he jumped up, in a mere impulse, left the house unobserved, and, without proposing to do so, made his way to the favourite spot in the wood, the scene of his misdoings of the previous evening. There, flinging himself on his breast, and supporting his head with one of his hands, he relapsed into his recent apathy.

By degrees, the objects, the sounds, and the perfumes of the little solitude around him, worked the boy's soul into good.—Poor Daniel undervalued himself in supposing that his spirit was naturally of a dull and unapprehensive kind. In fact, its want of zest for literary instruction, should be ascribed to a want of the influence upon it of the opportunity and method best suited to its developement ; and, unknown to himself, Daniel learned much from another source—Nature. Beauty,

grace, harmony, in the forms of objects, in their colours, and in their scents, in the unclouded or in the clouded heavens, and in the voices of living and of inanimate things—all found a way deeply into him, and cultivated by appealing to his mind and heart, until he could feel them all *in* himself; and sudden tears and smiles would testify this consciousness as he sauntered or reclined abroad, completely alone. And such effects were now wrought upon him, by the virgin green of the half-unfolded leaves, by the gentle curving of some trees, and the stately shooting up of others; by the motion of leaf and bough in the wavy undulating air; by the patches of blue sky, and of yellow clouds caught overhead; by the bunches of primroses and daisies around him; by their odour; and by the blended music of the wood, the chirping of grasshoppers, the pipi hum of millions of other insects, the chorus of birds great and small, and the chafing of the unseen brook, and the rustle of the light foliage, sounds not unlike each other. He looked and listened, and breathed the pure and pleasant breeze in and out again, with lengthened heavings and sinkings of his breast. He began to revive and glow, in happy feelings. His mother recurred to his mind's eye, as a being of perfect love for him, and of perfect loveliness, to be loved with his earliest and best return of affection; and his own errors became naked to his interior glance, and never before had he taken such resolutions to make himself worthy of his adored parent. From this delightful mood he was startled by a well-known voice, near to him, in the wood, though as yet he saw no one. It was his May-day bacchante, calling upon a pet bird which had strayed from her. Daniel leaped up to avoid one, whom, in his present frame of mind, he felt to be an unfitting, if not a degrading associate, and whom he regretted he had ever condescended to make free with. Before he could plunge into the thickets at the other side of the little open space, Jinny was at his elbow. The girl, though perhaps younger than Daniel, approached to an expression of form, which, along with a precosity of consciousness, derived from gay companions of riper years, to whose influence her mother's early death exposed her, caused Miss Jinny to invest herself with womanly claims upon attention, long before her time. She was not handsome; yet a certain saucy archness and self-command gave her some means of enforcing her pretensions. And whether it resulted from mere unfixed giddiness, or that she and her brother, a shrewd youth, had brought it into something like a plan, Daniel D'Arcy had lately been the object of all her fascinations.

"Tare-an-ages!" cried Jinny, as she appeared, "an' is it you, Masther Dan, come back to the ould place? a body would think you'd be comin' to look for somebody."

"Why, then, a body would think mighty wrong, Jinny Haggerty," answered Dan, solemnly.

"Would they, sir? oh, very well; but it isn't for nothing I come here anyhow—there's that born thief, Jemmy, my stair, (starling,) an' he hopped off again an hour ago, and won't come to my shoulder for all I can say or bawl to him, whenever he's after hiding himself—didn't you hear me coaxin' him?" continued Jinny, resolved to prove the special reason of her sudden appearance: and Dan admitted the fact required.

"Maybe he showed himself to you, Masther Dan?"

"No, though he might have been here, for what I know, Jinny; I was not thinking o' such things."

"Weren't you, sir? To be sure, not; why should you, I mean?" The girl eyed Dan shrewdly, as he half turned his back upon her. "Well, sir, the good evenin' to you, kindly—I must go look for Jemmy all through the wood—stop—ould! isn't that the rap o' the world, makin' game o' me on the top o' that tree? musha, I'd like to be a boy to climb up to him!"

"That is not your bird, Jinny," said Daniel, after he had advanced a step towards the tree; "there, he flies off, and 'tis a black-bird."

"An' so it is, an' many thanks, sir. You wouldn't have time to cross over to the other side o' the place, sir, to try an' hunt him out for me, would you? Dinny is gone a-fishing with my ould daddy, or I'd never ax you the word; an' sure you'll come," she continued, playing some dancing pranks at his side; "if you have half as much time to spare as you had the last evenin'. Mуша, but that was a pleasant evening, wasn't it?"

"No, Jinny; it has turned out any thing but pleasant to me; and it wasn't a well-spent evening, either; and it's come into my mind to spend no more such evenings, or mornings, or days, with you, Jinny, or with any body else."

"Arrah, ay, masther Dan? an' what'll we all do, now, I wonder?" She laughed gayly, but her heart was stung. "Well, a bright evenin' to you, sir; there's new-comers at the house, we hear, that bates all afore 'em for the beauty, isn't there? and so, poor people must keep their distance, by coarse.—

Jemmy! Jemmy!" screaming to her bird, "I'll have you, Jemmy, any how, or die by it!"

So saying, she scrambled through the brushwood, and Daniel was again alone. Congratulating himself upon his heroic conduct to the young temptress, he paid his personal merits the compliment of believing that Jinny's story about her pet-bird was all pure invention. In this, however, he wronged her, as succeeding events proved.

She had departed out of sight and hearing but a short time, when, from a different part of the wood, he heard other female accents, seemingly those of coaxing and condolence, addressed to some suffering object of interest. They drew near; and presently a girl of about Jinny's age, but obviously of gentle rank, and very beautiful withal, emerged into the open space; she held a starling to her bosom; Jinny Haggerty's truant. The bird drooped one of his wings, from beneath which blood trickled upon the ruff of his protectress, whose soft and musical tones still comforted his sufferings, and assured him of attention.

After advancing some steps, the young lady raised up her head, looked round in some alarm, and muttered, "Goodness! there is no one here!" The same instant, however, she saw Daniel, and drew back from him, still more frightened, as her changing colour proved.

Daniel grew red, instead of pale, and bowing very clumsily, did not quit his place, nor speak, but only fixed his large, startled, dancing blue eyes upon the beautiful intruder. The girl was not re-assured by his manner; and his appearance, comprehended at a second glance, told less in Daniel's favour. He had never been tasty in his attire; and his every-day suit, for roaming about in with Jinny Haggerty, was of a half-peasant fashion, and upon this occasion, happened to be even unusually neglected and graceless, owing to the events of the previous night, and of the passing day. Moreover, as has been remarked of his exterior, at more advanced years, Daniel's figure was rather of the square and burly cast, which gentlemen do not prefer to inherit; so that, altogether, the unprotected young lady felt little confidence in his presence.

"Your servant, Mistress," at last said Dan, in his best way; he advanced, and she shrieked.

"Surely, there is nothing to fear from me," he continued; "I am standing still;" and now he took courage, because he was half offended; "but maybe I can do you some service."

"I have missed my friends," she replied, somewhat quieted,

"running after this poor bird, which fluttered down with a broken wing from a tree near to where we all sat, and I thought I was returning to them, after picking it up, but find this is not the way ; and what shall I do to join them ?"

"Doubtless I can conduct you to them, Mistress," replied Daniel ; "I know all the passes and paths of the wood, and can even guess, maybe, the spot where you have come from."

"I pray you, rather let me rest here, till you discover them, then ; I am tired with hurrying after the poor starling ;" and once more the young lady slightly drew back from his offered approach. Without another word, Daniel bounded away, his brow reddening, "Poor bird, poor bird, how hurt you are !" said the young stranger, speaking loudly, to stifle her fears at being left alone.

"Poor Jem ! poor Jem !" screamed the starling.

"Ay, indeed ! a pet ?" she resumed : "and whose, pretty one ?"

"Jinny ! Jinny !" the bird seemed to reply ; and, as if answering his call, Jinny abruptly appeared, her face flushed with passion. She had been returning to fall in again with Daniel D'Arcy, followed by her brother ; who, notwithstanding her assertion, had not gone a-fishing, and to whom she had detailed her lover's slight ; approaching the sequestered spot in a new direction, she had seen him eagerly spring off to seek the young lady's friends ; had then peeped through the trees, and caught a glimpse of, as she readily concluded, a rival, for whom Daniel so lately repulsed her ; in that rival's hands beheld her stair, wounded and bleeding ; and thus a mixture of violent feelings gave to her face the wrathful expression mentioned.

"Jinny ! Jinny !" screamed the bird.

"Jinny's pet ? and who is Jinny ?"

"Look here an' you'll know, Miss, whoever *you* are !" exclaimed the young virago ; "gi' me my bird, gi' me my bird !" she continued, closing on her new acquaintance ; "give him to me if you're after leaving the life in him ! Oh, murther, murther, see how he's bleeding !"

"I am ready to give up the poor bird to his owner," answered the stranger, "as free of injury as it came into my hands, for it was hurt before I caught it ; but I must first be sure who *is* its owner."

"Tare-an'-ages ! duv you hear that, Dinny ?" resumed the girl, turning to her brother, who now stood at her back ; "she stakes my stair, at the first going off, and then wants to make

a story-teller of me to my face, saying he is *not* mine ? Give, I bid you !” and Jinny seized her supposed rival by the arm, who screamed aloud : the saucy girl’s language had shocked her, and now she was frightened. She did not, however, let the starling escape from the soft pressure of the hand which held him to her bosom, and her enemy continued to drag her by the disengaged arm, when Daniel D’Arcy hastily reappeared upon the scene, and seizing Jinny round the waist, flung her with some force several paces distant.

“Give the bold hussey her stair, Miss Dora,” he at the same time said, “and fear nothing farther from her. I have seen your friends and mine, and they will be here in a moment.” The young lady allowed him to take the bird from her, and he set it on the ground, over which it speedily hopped its way to Jinny.

“Oh, poor fellow, poor fellow, an’ is this the way we’re treated !” cried his mistress, as she picked him up in a fury ; “your poor wing broke, an’ the blood comin’ from your heart, and my arm almost smashed across, only for saying you *wor* my own !”

“You had better leave this place, and go home to your father, Jinny,” said Daniel ; “you, sir,” turning to Dinny, “take her away.”

“I won’t then, *you, sir*, ” answered Dinny, instantly retorting the term of contempt. He had hitherto shared all his sister’s feelings of jealousy towards Miss Dora Donavan, and of spite towards his young master, and Dan’s violent treatment of Jinny, aided by a vulgar assumption of equality with his companion of the wood and of the field, now threw Dennis Haggerty off the guard of his usual prudence and self-command.

“Take her away this moment !” resumed Daniel, advancing to her bold defendant.

“And what’ll your grandeeship say if I don’t ?” questioned Dinny, also advancing, as he clenched his fists at his sides, and squared his elbows.

“What’ll I do, you mean !” cried Daniel.

“Well, and what’s that, sir ?”

“Knock your saucy teeth down your throat !”

“Are you the boy that’s able to do as much ?” demanded the gamekeeper’s son, coming still closer, until their noses almost touched.

“It never was in him !” said the incendiary, Jinny.

“Try !” exclaimed Dan ; and the word was scarce spoken

when his antagonist underwent the experiment to his cost. But he was about two years older than Daniel D'Arcy, and therefore as able as willing to retaliate, so that a deadly conflict ensued between them ; Jinny exalting her shrill voice to encourage her brother, after every blow, and Miss Dora Donovan screaming in terror, and ready to drop down from faintness. But the battle proved a short one, for Mr. and Mrs. D'Arcy, and Mr. Donovan and his elder daughter, Helen, quickly appeared to bid it end. So far as it went, however, Daniel was the victor ; for Dinnis Haggerty lay at his feet when his father, flourishing his stick, led him apart ; and although the marks and effects of many hard blows were visible on his forehead and face, the insolent "follower of the family" showed in a still worse plight, and moreover was weakened and exhausted.

And this proof of Daniel's prowess, over a lad his superior in years as well as in pugnacious experience, made Mr. D'Arcy's heart glad and proud, and at once restored our hero to the full favour he had temporarily forfeited by his late misdoings. Hugh clapped him on the back, and now dragging in an embarrassing allusion, paternally recommended him to "do the same, the longest day he lived, against high and low, rich and poor, for the sake of a fair lady," (and here the fair lady glanced at, clung closer to the arms of her father and of her elder sister, as she and they stood at the utmost distance allowed by the open space in which the scene was enacted.)

Even Mrs. D'Arcy, the stately and fastidious as well as amiable and high-minded Mrs. D'Arcy, was surprised out of all her methodical displeasure against poor Daniel, as she flew to his side, and, only alive to the mother's anxiety, applied her handkerchief to the wounds on his face, and peered at them to ascertain if any were dangerous. She did not fail, indeed, to cry out shame upon such an encounter between a young gentleman of condition, and one of the menials of his father's service ; but when her husband insisted on the necessity of the case, and Mr. Donovan mildly abetted him, and even Miss Dora contributed a word which was more spiritedly re-echoed by her more spirited sister, the punctilious lady quite softened her speech towards the bleeding champion of beauty, and affectionately took his rough hands in hers, and kissed his swollen and bruised lips. And Daniel then fell in simple earnestness upon his knees, for the second time that day, and was utterly forgiven the packet of love-gifts, the syllabub, Nancy, and all.

Meantime, Mr. D'Arcy proceeded to deal upon Dennis Haggerty: (as to Jinny, she had vanished into her native woods the moment the awful party caught her eye.)

The discomfited son of the gamekeeper, regaining his feet, was skulking away: Hugh D'Arcy ran after him; caught him by both ears, and, holding his grip, faced him round to the company. Then followed a torrent of abuse against Dennis, as well for previously attempting to lead Daniel D'Arcy into evil ways, as for his present offence; and against Jinny, as his abettor and auxiliary seducer; and against their father for—(if nothing else)—for *being* the father of such a graceless son and such a saucy daughter; and the lecture ended by Hugh commissioning Dennis to convey to his innocent parent peremptory orders to remove from his employment and his grounds, early the next morning. The lad listened in sulky silence, not even wincing under the severe pinches occasionally inflicted upon his ears, and, without a word, a look, or salutation, withdrew into the thickets.

CHAPTER VI.

Mrs. D'Arcy, leaning upon Daniel's arm, after having vainly requested him to lean upon hers, led the way homeward, her thoughts now chiefly occupied with arranging, in anticipation, the various emollients and plasters which were to be forthwith applied to his face. She could not resist, meantime, certain recurrences to the alarming scene which she had just partly witnessed. Endeavouring to forget her scruples upon the score of Daniel not having had a more worthy foe, or done battle with more becoming weapons than his naked fists, and also trying to compound with her notions of order for having been compelled, as it were, to forgive him his late offences full twelve hours before the allotted time, the good lady still drew comfort from the whole occurrence. It had begun in a deadly quarrel between Daniel and Dinny Haggerty and his sister, and ended in, she trusted, the eternal separation of the hitherto bosom-friends. That was a happy chance for her wayward and vagrant son. It had also involved his first meeting with a young lady whom Mrs. D'Arcy hoped might particularly interest him, and under circumstances which, considering the

years of the parties, bid fair to speed her hopes; ay, even more effectually (although this was regretfully admitted) than the first meeting she had herself arranged for them could have done. But here arose new caution and new calculations in Mrs. D'Arcy's breast; she would have to take care lest the incidents of this self-same propitious rencontre between the young people did not too quickly mature the very mutual interest which, ultimately, it was her object to allow both to indulge towards each other, but which, on Daniel's part, at least, must, according to her plan, be recognised and countenanced only as the reward of years of good conduct and merit, in different ways. And full of these thoughts, and determined to begin to act immediately upon them, Mrs. D'Arcy arrived at home with her party.

Somewhat to the derangement of her now fully-restored equanimity, Daniel, with a smiling and bluff indifference of manner, declined his mother's plasters and attentions, and bounded up stairs to his bed-chamber, leaving her gazing after his flight in a reprehensive silence. But smoothing her brow, Mrs. D'Arcy turned with her guests into the dining-room, where supper was laid out, and continued the working of plans more important than that of curing a few scratches upon her boy's face.

No sooner had the lady seated herself at the head of her table, than she ingeniously led to a conversation which was necessary for her purposes, and contrived so to time and apportion it, that, at the moment Daniel entered the room, it proceeded onward from the very point upon which his mother wished to fix him. Some little interruption first took place, however, as follows.

"Why, Daniel, my dear boy," said Mrs. D'Arcy, "I declare, now that you have doctored yourself, I *was* frightened more than I need to have been about you."

"I told you so, mother dear," answered Daniel; in fact, a basin and towel had helped to remove from his face all serious appearances of hurt; a few little knobs on his forehead, and a swelling of his under-lip, into a pout rather becoming than otherwise, being the only symptoms of his late combat; and while we are mentioning these facts, he is stooping down at his mother's side to receive and return her proffered embrace.

"And, on my word," continued Mrs. D'Arcy, "it has done you good, altogether, to absent yourself from us, this little while: stand out there, Dan, till your father sees you:" and Dan, blushing until the partial suffusions caused by Dinny

Haggerty's knuckles were lost in the pervading crimson, exhibited to the company his light-brown hair carefully divided upon his forehead, and flowing in some order down to his shoulders, his fresh neck-cloth neatly tied, and an entire Sunday suit of clothes disposed with unusual skill. His father, leaning forward upon his cane, eyed him jeeringly, now and then changing his regards to Miss and Miss Dora Donovan; and the latter-mentioned of these young ladies looked down into her sister's lap, where she held her sister's hand in her own, her features all serious, and her cheeks redder, if possible, than Daniel D'Arcy's; while the former enjoyed our poor hero's little dilemma with a sly vivacity of glance, and an archness of smile respondent to her host's broad and merciless raillyery."

"Yes, he's well enough, this evening," said Hugh D'Arcy, coughing.

"And I am obliged to him for remembering how he had to spend the evening," resumed the mother.

"Upon my word, mother," said Dan, half rallying, but still not at his ease, though he spoke with great simplicity, "Nance did more of it than I."

"Um," continued his father; "Nance; go along and sit down there, you big booby, you," nodding to a vacant seat beside Miss Dora, while he touched Daniel with the ferrule of his cane in the side. But instead of immediately obeying his parent's command, Dan looked wistfully round the table, as if for another seat, and many little awkwardnesses occurred before he finally took the place allotted to him.

And now supper commenced, and Mrs. D'Arcy renewed her topic.

"Truly, Mr. Donovan, your permission that I should so far endeavour to lighten their late loss to your dear girls, gives me very great pleasure, at the same time that I avow it, the highest honour ever conferred upon me."

Daniel was all attention.

"The pleasure and the honour both ought to be felt by them and me to the greatest extent, Madam D'Arcy," said the grave Mr. Donovan, his voice, look, and manner, regulated by, perhaps, an extreme of the old politeness, while that again was subdued by a succession of many sorrows.

"And," he continued, "my poor girls and I do feel your kindness, as it ought to be felt, be assured, Madam;—what, my loves?" he turned towards them, his eyes moist, and his lip in motion. Dora's tears fell fast into her lap, upon her

sister's hand, while her looks were still cast down ; and even the sprightly Helen showed that she keenly felt the appeal, although she employed herself in passing an arm round Dora's neck, and gazing steadfastly upon her face, as if to divert or soothe her younger sister ; "and yet," added Mr. Donovan, "allow me, without any ungrateful reservations, to say, that we never could suffer ourselves to become so deeply your debtors, did not these foolish laws make our compliance necessary, by forbidding to the youthful of our religion, the opportunities for public, or even private tuition, at the hands of strangers, and throwing our boys and girls upon such help as their fathers and mothers alone can afford ; or, in the absence of father or mother, as a compassionate and honourable friend may be disposed to lend."

"Though I am not of your communion, sir," resumed Mrs. D'Arcy, "yet I can fully enter into your case, for indeed I have had experience of it, my children being brought up according to their father's wishes."

"According to agreement," interrupted Hugh ; "come, Madam D'Arcy, speak fair."

"Well, and by agreement, as you say, Mr. D'Arcy ; nor did I wish to forget as much : but, to continue, Mr. Donovan ; Marks, my elder son, is now in a fair way, I hope, of escaping the doom of ignorance passed upon him, at home ; but there sits my poor Daniel, my own dear boy, who hitherto has had no more than the scanty tuition his mother was enabled to impart."

"Little more," interrupted Hugh, again ; "for I do not pretend to aver that I gave much positive help, having had so many other important matters to occupy me ; if, in truth, a great attention to his hours of task-study counts nothing."

"And," continued Mrs. D'Arcy, "it is plain that, although a lady may be competent to assist in the education of ladies, she can hope to contribute but little to the forming of the mind of a gentleman."

"Indeed, mother dear," said Daniel, whose eyes were fixed on Mrs. D'Arcy, since she uttered the first affectionate phrase in reference to him, and whose face now glowed with generous pleasure and conscientious disinterestedness, "indeed, and indeed, you were, and are able to teach me a great deal more than I ever *yet* would learn from you, as I ought :" and his mother fully understood the future promise meant in the emphasis he bestowed upon the word "yet."

"Have you got beyond embroidery-sitch, 'yet,' master

Daniel?" whispered Helen Donovan, bending across her sister.

Daniel half-started, and looked staringly into the young lady's eyes, at first believing that she meant to offend him; but the archness, which was struggling into only good-humoured laughter through her affectation of gravity, soon set him at his ease, and presently they broke into a merry peal together; the serious Dora, all the while that she reprovingly pressed her sister's arm, also venturing to glance up into the face of her new acquaintance, and then to smile in such a sort as was meant to explain and excuse Helen's freedom.

Mrs. D'Arcy was beginning to take Daniel gently in hand for his loud laughter, which he now kept up alone; but Mr. Donovan's patronising smile towards the young group, and her husband's nods and authoritative signs, checked, for this time, a display of her sense of decorum. The following speech from Mr. Donovan also diverted her attention.

"It has been in my mind, madam, to lay before your judgment what I am now going to say, and your last words may give leave for the introducing of it. I admit that, however accomplished a lady may be, nay, although to the utmost which a lady *can* be"—(bowing to Mrs. D'Arcy, who graciously and gravely bowed in return)—"she is, nevertheless, somewhat unfitted to perfect the education of one of us of the rougher sex; but if I may speak of myself, mayhap I could passingly assist in the tuition of Master Daniel D'Arcy, while you, madam, occasionally pursue your generous intentions towards my girls, and while your good husband attends to his necessary duties;" now bowing to Hugh, who answered by a repetition of gladsome nods, which at once expressed his gratitude for the offered service, and for the little polite fiction that echoed his own recent explanation of the causes of his inaction as a pedagogue.

Mrs. D'Arcy, meantime, had, by this proposal, arrived at one important point of her anticipation, and her acknowledgments were eloquent both in words and manner.

"You hear, Daniel, my dear?" she continued, turning to her son.

Daniel was looking down when she addressed him, the tip of his fore-finger resting upon the edge of the table, and his features and air betokening a deep and pleasing abstraction of mind, and tears now trembled on his lids as he answered, "I do, mother, I do; I do hear, and understand too; thanks to

you, mother ; thanks to you for every thing, as well as for this ; and thanks to you, Mr. Donovan—many thanks, sir."

" Well ! but are not the poor chilfer to stand up in one class together ?" asked Hugh D'Arcy.

His lady and his eldest guest looked inquiringly at each other for an arrangement of this little point, hitherto unconsidered ; Daniel at them both alternately, hoping a certain adjustment of it ; and Helen whispered Dora, to some effect that again caused her grave younger sister to smile, and press her arm in an appeal for silence and forbearance.

" Sometimes, I *do* think," was Mrs. D'Arcy's answer at length to her husband's question.

" And I agree, madam," said Mr. Donevan, again politely pausing for a detail of the lady's views.

" It strikes me, sir, that on some occasions these young ladies may be best benefited by attending to me alone ; on some occasions, my poor boy, by attending to you alone ; while, now and then, they and he may with profit receive your instruction in class, as Mr. D'Arcy has remarked—now and then, mine."

Still Mr. Donovan agreed ; Dan looked happier and happier ; Miss Donovan again disturbed her sister's softly, serious mood ; and Hugh said—

" So far, so good ;—yes ; and at all times they will be the better of hearing one another in their tasks, to prepare for the time of standing up to say them."

" As often as possible," concurred Mrs. D'Arcy ; and then the subject was farther discussed in its more minute branches. Pursuant to the general plan of divided tuition, occasionally, and occasionally of lessons in class, it appeared evident that, perhaps for a week at a time, the young ladies should visit Mrs. D'Arcy, accompanied by their father, and, afterward, Daniel might go home with his friends, and spend about as much time under Mr. Donovan's roof, whither Mrs. D'Arcy would often repair. And, as good measures cannot too soon be engaged in, the very next day was appointed for a joint examination by the domestic schoolmaster and schoolmistress, of the state of forwardness, in different branches of acquirement, of the three pupils, with a view to their future progress together ; and Mr. Donovan accepted an invitation to assist in the investigation in the friendly house which at present sheltered him. In fine, the party broke up for the night, with a concluding caution—namely, to keep as a profound secret their knowledge

of Mr. Donovan's undertaking to play the pedagogue, particularly in behalf of Daniel D'Arcy, lest some invidious and ultra-loyal neighbour might seek to apply to the offence the letter of the statute then in strict force against all of that gentleman's creed, who should attempt the education of youth, publicly, or in a private family.

Before retiring to his sleeping-chamber, Daniel got a cordial hand-shake from his future tutor, an unusually violent one, followed by a very affectionate slap on the cheek from his father; a kiss, which out-breathed a sigh of pleasure, upon his other cheek, from his mother; a familiar nod, and a sparkling smile from Miss Helen, with a whisper—"be a good boy, and get up betimes, and mind your book, to-morrow morning;" and from Miss Dora—but *their* parting for the night merits one word to itself.

"And you, Mistress Dora," said Dan, stepping close to her, and bowing gracelessly—"a good-night to you, too."

"A very good-night, Master Daniel," answered Dora, making a profound reverence.

"Thankee,—and I hope, Mistress Dora, your little fright in the wood won't—won't, I mean—" he stopped short.

"Disturb her gentle repose," supplied Helen.

"Yes,—thankee, Mistress Helen—yes, indeed," agreed Daniel, eagerly.

"Nor the hurt that fright got for you, sir, disturb—" began Dora, looking up at his nobby forehead and inflamed lip—which, however, was redder than the reddest rose, and therefore—(perhaps this has been intimated before) handsomer than usual.

"Nor the hurt that fright got you, sir, disturb it, either," again added Helen.

"Whose sleep?" asked Daniel.

"Yours, sir—fie, now, Helen," answered Dora.

"Oh, I see," laughed Dan, awkwardly—"you're just *full of fun on me*, this evening, Mistress Helen—and on your sister too—hurt? is it these little things hurt me?—poo!—not the least in life—and so, the good-night over again to the both of ye, ladies; and you're welcome to your jest, Mistress Helen—ha, ha!—good-night!"

He was leaving the room with a very bad grace, when his father cried out to him to stop: advanced; took his hand: led him back to his fair new acquaintances, and said, "Why, you sheep-faced disgrace of the family! is that the way your father's son bids good-night to the two little beauties under his

roof? kneel down on one knee, this moment, or I'll—" raising his cane :—Daniel knelt, much amused, but not acting his part lightly or charmingly, except that, to some eyes, utter simplicity, shown even in inelegant embarrassment, may have a charm—"present hands, now, for a hand of each lady," continued his father. He did as he was commanded, and his mute supplication was answered—"Salute the darling little hands, now, one by one, I tell you!—stop! Miss Donovan's first—there—what are you doing, you rap!" roared Hugh D'Arcy as, with a slight scream Miss Donovan snatched her hand away.

"It will bite, sir!" answered the young lady. "Take care, Dora."

Daniel went through the imposed ceremony upon Dora's hand, however, without arousing her terrors, and while Mr. Donovan smiled only a barely tolerating smile on this scene of Hugh D'Arcy's getting-up, and while the lady of the mansion looked downright disapproval, our hero finally escaped in blended confusion and delight, embarrassment and glee, to bed.

Entering his sleeping chamber, he knelt, to offer up his nightly prayers, in a purer spirit and with a happier heart than he had commanded upon the same occasion about twenty-four hours previously. And in a short time he lay down on his little bed, in a frame of mind which we are glad to reveal to our readers by the help of a third person.

Ere the first cloud of slumber began to roll over Daniel's mental vision, a well-known soft footstep sounded on the landing-place outside his door; light streamed through the key-hole into his rayless apartment; and Mrs. D'Arcy cautiously and gently entered, a taper in her hand, and a sedate joy blandly glowing over her beautiful features.

"You need not take such heed; I'm not asleep yet, mother," said Daniel, as she advanced on tiptoe to his bedside.

"Then 'tis as well you are not, Dan," she replied, "for, in order to banish for ever out of my head our parting of last night, I have just come into your room that I might bid God bless you, as you slept; and now I bid it to you waking;" she stooped over him, and touched her lips to his.

"And God bless you, mother; and I am glad you do not find me asleep," said Daniel.

"This is a happier night to you than the last, my dear boy?" she resumed, sitting on a chair at his pillow, and taking his hand.

"Oh, mother, dear, 'tis the happiest I ever knew ;" he earnestly returned her soft pressure ; "for it shows me more than ever that you love me well—not meaning to say I once doubted you did—but still it shows it more than ever ; and, for that same reason, my heart is better at peace with itself than ever I knew it to be ; and my thoughts bent, in earnest, to try and give you the return I know you'll like to get from me."

"Then *you* like the prospect of being assisted by Mr. Donovan in your studies, Dan ?"

"Oh, indeed and I do, mother ; and—but I'll make no more promises ; but wait, mother, and, with God's blessing, maybe you'll see I do ; the blessing you prayed down upon poor Dan's head this night."

"Under it, my dear Dan, your good endeavours must come to good ; and, tell me—you feel no dislike, neither, to try and improve yourself by the side of his daughters, now and then ?"

"None in the world, mother dear ; only this much I'll tell you, after all ; I'm a little afraid of their being more bright at their book than I am or knowing more of it than I do."

Well, Dan,—suppose so—what then ?"

"Why, mother, I'd be shy of letting them see how backward I am."

"Oh, my dear, do not give way to such a fancy : if those young ladies are really better, educated for their years than you are, which as yet I cannot answer for, of course they will readily make allowances for your want of opportunity."

"It's very good and loving of you to say that, mother, considering how I used the real opportunity I have had : but, supposing right reasons for their being of this mind, you think it will ever come across their thoughts ?"

"No doubt ; I am sure they are both good and considerate enough to allow of its occurring to them, Dan."

"There's one of them—the sharpest creature I ever met, at her years," continued Dan, thoughtfully.

"Which do you mean ?"

"Miss Donovan, the oulder of the two.

"Oh, you give too strong a word to the young lady's sprightliness, Dan, my dear ; Miss Dora, however, is your favourite, it seems ?"

"Now, I declare to you mother," he replied, speaking, rapidly and over-earnestly, while the mother's watchful eye saw his cheeks flame,—"I declare to you that it never once came into my head to say to myself which I liked, or which I didn't

like—there wasn't the time for it, you know—and besides, mother, would it become me to make so bould?"

"Well, Dan, I respect your modesty; and, as you say, there certainly was not time for you to form any opinion of one young lady or the other; besides, it grieves me to remind you that our amiable young visitors are, I believe, the very first ladies, in fact the first persons of your own age and rank, and of the other sex, with whom you have been made acquainted; hence, much of their manner and conduct must needs appear particular in your eyes, and, until you grow more used to it, perhaps strange or embarrassing, now and then."

"And there you speak the truth, mother; and I felt what you say before, though I did not see it clearly: and, to tell you the truth, in return, I wasn't myself in the young gentlemen's company, to-night—one of them, at least, I mean; I wasn't their equal, I thought, though I know I am; nor free to talk, and look, and say and do before them, the way I used to talk and look, and do and say, before others."

"All very natural, Dan, and to be expected: but it is just as much to be expected that you will soon alter your sentiments on this subject."

"And you think it will come round, mother?"

"And why should I not, my dear? you *know* you *are* their equal, you say,—at least in birth and station in the world: and the new course you determine upon pursuing, from to-morrow morning, forward, will speedily give you the feeling of perfect equality in every other respect."

"Will it make my behaviour better and freer—and—and more like a gentleman's, mother?"

"To be sure, my love: manners, above all other things, are learned from associates: and as you are to be more at home with us all in future, you know, you need have little fear on that score."

"Thanks to you, mother, many thanks," murmured Daniel. He felt in his heart the delicate allusion contained in the last words; and while he spurned, in remorse and self-accusation, his late low-lived friends of the woods, and their cronies, (whose vulgarity, by the way, had long been making inroads upon his manner, and even upon his phraseology and tones,) Daniel D'Arcy glowed with the noble ambition of future amendment—an ambition now unchilled by any of his former melancholy forebodings, because set in action by more than one of the most powerful motives which human nature can supply. His mother watched him close, and thanked Heaven, as she had a

right to do, for so speedy an appearance of good results from her virtuous, though elaborate plans ; and with a parting salute, and without a remaing fear of the wiles of the wood-ranger's son, or of his more dangerous sister, retired to her own sleeping apartment.

CHAPTER VII.

IT is unnecessary to say what firm resolves to get up early next morning closed Daniel D'Arcy's meditations for the night. But it was with a kind of terror, and a recurrence of former auguries of fatality, that he found himself unable to realize his determination.

"Why, then, what in the world, Masther Dan!" were the words which first roused him, while a strong arm shook one of the posts of his bed,—and sitting up, half-awake, he recognised Nancy, intercepting a glorious burst of sunshine which came through his window.

"Eh, Nancy! What—what has happened below?"

"You're not up below yet, sir—that's what has happened, and the more heavier shame for you, Masther Dan, I tell you—when it was nothing out of your mouth last night, but, 'Nancy, Nancy, a good girl, don't forget to call me at six—six to the minute, Nancy,'—and here I came at six, sure enough, sir, and called, and bawled, an' went so far as to shake your feet through the bed-clothes, and all I could get out o' you for the same was no more nor a cross contankerous grunt like, an' a kick an' a lash at me at last."

"Oh, Nancy, and were you here before? and what o'clock is it now?"

"Was I here afore? did ever any Christen listen to the like! an' what o'clock is it now? It's eight o'clock, I bid you, sir, an' every sowl in the house up an' out but yourself—the young ladies an' all, an' their bukes under their arms."

"Oh, Nancy, this is too bad!—Give me my clothes, will you, like a good girl. Thankee—not them—the clothes I wore last night."

"Ay, in troth!" cried Nancy, in tones of admiration—"an' we're to go so brave, are we, from this blessed day, out?—all our week-days, Sundays; no less!"

" You may give the old ones to my foster-brother at any rate, Nancy. But, Nancy, why in the world did you leave me here to sleep my seven senses away ? I didn't think you'd be such a traitor to me, Nancy."

" Duv ye hear him now ! Lord save us ! why, what could I do wid you, Masther Dan, that I didn't do, over an' over, till you vexed me an' tired me so, that a saint couldn't bear it ?"

" You ought to have shaken me out on the floor—pulled the bed-clothes off—thrown water on me—any thing, Nancy, to hinder this from happening."

" Go along, Masther Dan—an' it's a schandle for you to talk so to me, so it is, all as one as if I was Ned the gardener, a man-creature like yourself an' him ; but, maybe, he's the fitter to come an' waken you every other morning ? an', maybe, you'll bid me tell him as much ?"

" Well then, do, Nancy, and thankee for saying it—I never thought of Ned—and tell him he is never to quit my bed-side till he makes me get up, no matter how he does it—and now give me my clothes, and run off with yourself—here I'm spending more and more time, for nothing."

" Oh, to be sure !" were the only words Nancy uttered, as she obeyed her young master's commands ; and then she retired to her kitchen, certainly offended and indignant, but on what account has never been positively ascertained.

It may be worth while to mention here, with what success Daniel fought against this one indolent habit of staying a-bed beyond his time, even aided as he was by his new ally, Ned.

The next morning, and the next, the young man came to his bed-side at six o'clock, and proceeding, as he thought, to the very limit of his privileges, called and called to the sleeper, until he obtained an intelligible answer, and a faithful promise to " jump up, quick ;" and then he retired to his own occupations, satisfied that he had so far done his duty. After his disappearance, however, Daniel slept soundly till eight or nine, and subsequently took occasion to scold the gardener for having allowed him to do so, adding fresh instructions of a more rigorous kind ; emboldened by which, the lad next proceeded to steal the bed-clothes off the bed, and deposit them on the landing-place outside the chamber-door. When this measure was first effected, Daniel certainly half-awoke from a sensation of cold ; ay, and got up, but it was only to stagger round the room in search of his comfortable covering, and, finally, to discover them in the landing-place, trail them back to the bed, and coiling himself in their folds, resumed his slumbers. A

second time the young gardener endeavoured to spirit them away ; but a kind of muscular experience now put Daniel on his guard, so that, although he never awoke during the struggle, his hands grasped them tight, and his respectful servant, seeing it impossible to effect a seizure without absolute violence, withdrew in despair.

Again Daniel remonstrated in the course of that day, and having heard the facts of the case, commanded Ned not to spare any effort of strength which might be necessary to accomplish the desired object. "If I hold the bed-clothes, drag them from me," said Dan, "and take them clean out of the house ; if I struggle much, struggle against me ; ay, lift me body and bones off the bed, supposing it comes to that——."

"An' that I am able, Masther Dan."

"Yes; but you ought to be able, you are older, and bigger, and stronger than I am." Well. Ned put forth his strength the following morning, and his young master, still scarcely half-awake, made a still more desperate resistance, the one tugging "for the bare life," and the other hugging his dear sheets, blankets, and counterpane, with a devoted fidelity.

"Sorrow's in it!" cried Ned, getting vexed ; "give over this folly! you *must* quit that, now, by the powers o'man!" and he flung his athletic arms round Daniel, determined upon carrying into effect Daniel's own extreme instructions. Somewhat more aroused, but still unbowed with the power of distinguishing right from wrong, his inconsistent master met him with a resistance as furious as it was wholly unsuspected, kicking, plunging, writhing, and finally, clenching his fists and directing them against Ned's face.

"Divvle's in you, sir, stay there, then!" cried the enraged lad, relaxing his hold, "an' sleep there till you hear the angel Gaabril's thrummet, for Ned Hattery ; it's the last time he'll ever let you make sich a hand of him." And Daniel's best friend withdrew from their joint alliance against the fiends of sloth, nor could any persuasions prevail on him to return to it thenceforward ; and Daniel, muttering angrily, still had his morning doze till about nine o'clock, and enjoyed it every succeeding morning, to a period of time, at least, when reformation was of no avail in furtherance of the measures, for the sake of which he now vainly strove to get rid of his lazy and long-indulged habit.

The last pages have been an anticipation ; Daniel shall now be followed out of his father's house, into the pleasure grounds,

upon the morning when, spite of Nancy's faithful endeavour, he so shamefully overslept himself.

A book was in his hand, and he proposed to seek the solitude of a little evergreen arbour, in order to employ, as profitably as he could, even the short time left before breakfast.

The arbour was already occupied by Helen and Dora Donovan, and they, too, as Nancy's hint had prepared him to expect, were studiously engaged. He stopped before them, embarrassed, as usual, and awkwardly bowing and saying his good-morrow. Helen replied readily, with the gay self-possession, the almost satirical sparkle of eye, and the provoking smile which had been before his mind, when, upon the previous night, he made a kind of complaint of her to his mother. Dora half arose from her seat, (her sister had not done so,) inclined her person, and while her "good-morrow, Master Daniel," sounded upon his ear and heart as soft as the coo of the woodpigeon among his old haunts, her large round eyes met his, "like," as he said to himself in the depths of his mind, "like the open sky in warm summer-weather."

"Come now, sir, sit down, and it please you," continued Helen; "we were talking of you, and wanted your assistance, upon a hard point; and you know as we are all school-fellows, now, you ought not to refuse."

Smiling graciously, but sorely troubled at heart about the hard point, Daniel sat down accordingly.

It was no less than a question of Latin grammar; for the highly-educated and serious Mr. Donovan would make his daughters learned: only one of them, however, Helen, relished, or was the better of his lectures; while Dora almost always depended on her elder sister for as much parrot-like acquirement as enabled her to stammer through her task. On the present occasion, the students had been differing, before Daniel's appearance, about a very unargumentative matter: namely, whether a certain word should be called verb or noun; Dora meekly, though somewhat stupidly, insisting that Helen had told her, at their last task, that it was a noun; and Helen, almost losing her good-humour, because she knew no such thing could have happened.

Daniel, the umpire chosen to decide between them, left the question fully as open to debate as he had found it. In fact, although in his eighteenth year, grammar of every kind was to him a cabalistic mystery; so that his dilemma may be imagined, when Helen pressed him for an opinion, and grew more urgent as she observed his confusion, and suspected his igno-

rance. Sorely beset, he at last ventured upon an oracular judgment, which amused the young lady to excess : " Why, then, Mistress Helen, I think that, one way or the other, it would do very well."

During Miss Donovan's loud laugh, Dora reddening, and looking a little angry on her own account, perhaps, as well as upon Daniel's, intimated to her sister that there seemed no reason for such extraordinary mirth : and added, that although Master Daniel had not yet learned out of a grammar-book, in Latin, he might be a very good scholar for all that.

Dan thanked his gentle advocate with the full strength of his eyes, causing her to blush deeper than before, while the suffusion took a new character ; but Helen, little chidden, resumed her railery.

" Well, then, what books *has* he learned out of ?" she asked.

" Out of the Seven Champions," answered Daniel, confidently ; " and he knew a great deal of ould Irish history, by reason of listening to his father reading it by the fire, in the winter's evenings."

" Ay, indeed ?" said Helen, with an expression that Daniel, simple as he was, interpreted into ignorance, in her turn, of the branch of acquirement to which in the second instance he had alluded.

" You see, sister," observed Dora, " master Daniel does know something that we—you, at the least, do *not* know ; wasn't Brian Borhiumé the Great, the most noted king of Ireland, in ancient times, sir ?" she continued, evidently anxious to sooth his late embarrassment by getting him to display his newly-discovered view of knowledge.

" He was a great man, to be sure," answered Daniel, " only he wasn't King of Ireland, entirely, but King of Lumneach, that's now called Limerick ; but he drove all the Danes into the sea, any how, and made the people so honest and good-minded, that it was from one end of his country, Munster, to the other, that the young lady walked without hurt or harm, though she passed for the handsomest of her time, and had a power of goold and precious stones stuck all over her."

" Do you say so ?" asked Helen.

" Fie, now, sister ; and do let us hear more of these pleasant stories," said Dora.

" But Conn of the Hundred Battles was above Brian the Great," resumed Daniel, quite vain of himself, and anxious at once to shine in Dora's eyes, and triumph over Helen ; " and,

they say that Ollamh Fodhla, or the great Doctor, was above him, again, by reason of the grand palace that his queen, one mistress Thea, built at Tara, and the parliaments that Fodhla himself brought about in it—”

“ Parliaments, Master Daniel D’Arcy ?” interrupted Helen.

“ Yes, to be sure—parliaments,” insisted Dan ; “ made up of all the Ollamhs, and the Betachs, and the Irish lords, and the knights—”

“ And what was a Betach, sir ?” asked Dora.

“ The Betachs were keeper of houses of hospitality, Mistress Dora, for all strangers and travellers going the road : and every Betach had land, well-stocked ; and four roads ran to his house ; and its four doors were ever and always open ; and there used to be thousands of them ; the bell-betachs, the hospitable houses, all over the country, so there used ; and, furthermore, every knight sat under his own shield and coat of arms, at Tara ; and then there was the Psalter of Tara, writ out at all their parliaments ; and—”

“ Oh, that’s quite enough, Master Daniel,” again interrupted Helen ; “ now tell us something about Pompey the Great.”

“ Pompey the Great,” began Daniel, out of breath since his last harangue, and again starting with a flippancy of tone that promised no decrease of information ; “ Pompey the great—Pompey—stop—why, then, if he wasn’t one of the first ould Irish kings of all, I forget who he was.”

Daniel’s tormentress resumed her laugh ; he relapsed into his former confusion, and Dora, a second time, was coming to his assistance, when a summons to breakfast caused the learned party to postpone their discussion. But enough had been said and done to confirm Daniel in his awe, if not dislike of Helen, and to conceive in his breast a grateful tenderness towards her less brilliant sister.

After breakfast, he was subjected to new trials. His mother and Mr. Donovan, with Hugh D’Arcy for an audience, jointly set about cross-questioning their three pupils, in order to determine the literary progress of each. Daniel burned with infelt shame at the real display of his backwardness, which this measure made inevitable. Even in reading and in spelling, he found himself miserably inferior to his young friends ; and when called upon to take a pen, and write a sentence dictated to him from a book, he had no resource but to plead a sprained thumb, from his encounter with Dinnis Haggarty, and crave permission to supply a specimen of his skill at a future time. From this

dreaded ordeal he retired to his room to collect the thoughts, indulge the feelings, and methodize the plans it inspired him with. He would labour incessantly to overtake his classmates on the road of knowledge and acquirement. Not only would he perfectly master the tasks allotted him, but unknown to any one around him, without even his mother's knowledge, he would of his own accord, or, at least, with other and secret help, engage in additional studies. And here a happy idea occurred. Before it had been pronounced illegal for Roman Catholics to play the schoolmaster, a very humble pedagogue of that religion used to assemble a rustic seminary around him, in the neighbourhood of Mr. D'Arcy's house, and Dinnis Haggarty had been one of his most promising scholars, and often spoke of him to Daniel, as his "a-b-c-daarian," at an early age. The statute was levelled at the poor sage ; he thought to evade it by exercising his trade more in private : was informed against ; detected, and punished to a degree of rigour that made him altogether abandon his proud care of "the young idea" the moment he escaped from prison, and to try to earn his bread, or rather his beans or potatoes, as a field labourer, in a remote district. But, long after his change of profession, Dinnis still mentioned his name, now and then, to his young master ; nay, he declared that he knew where the ex-pedagogue was to be found, but a few weeks ago : and all this Daniel now brought to mind, and resolved to take advantage of.

His sprained thumb would, if well managed, exempt him from exhibiting his proficiency in writing, for a month, at least. Meantime, the accomplished tiller of the earth might be discovered and spoken to : and while no one at home could suspect what they were both about, Daniel determined to acquire a respectable knowledge and practice of penmanship. A slight difficulty started up, however, upon the very threshold of his laudable undertaking. He had not kept in mind the name of the place where, according to Dinnis Haggarty, the disguised schoolmaster resided ; to learn it anew he must personally apply to his discarded favourite ; and this was disagreeable to Daniel's feelings : not that he suspected Dinny of even the capability of playing traitor to him or his future preceptor, by whispering their illegal collusion to the watchful local authorities, and so getting one or both into trouble : no, notwithstanding even their recent quarrel, Daniel dreaded no such thing ; his sole demur arose from a dislike to require a favour at the hands of one upon whom he could no longer confer a favour of any kind : for Hugh D'Arcy's angry dismissal of the

Haggarties had been almost instantaneously and sullenly accepted and acted on by them, and the whole family were already wanderers from his grounds, and indebted for temporary shelter to the tenant of an unfriendly neighbour.

The necessity of the case overcame, however, Daniel's scruples, and he made up his mind to seek out Dinnis that very evening. In the mean while, the occupation of getting through his other tasks was inwardly admitted by him to be more pleasing than scholastic employment of any kind had ever before been. In fact he now had an assistant in his labour, and one whom he was as anxious to learn *from*, as to learn *for*. Following up her good-natured, and, indeed, compassionate sympathy in the garden, Dora Donovan took an unobserved occasion, soon after breakfast, to half hint to the backward scholar how much satisfaction it would give her, if, in addition to all other preparations, they two might learn their lessons together : and Daniel understood the motive of the proposal, and while he gladly accepted it, valued it also.

But the evening of this memorable day fell, and he went to obtain information from Dinnis Haggarty, as to the present residence of the schoolmaster. The lad met him with a show of good will for which Daniel's most favourable estimate of his old crony's character had not prepared him. Dinny's insolence and sullenness of the previous evening seemed to have quite passed away, nor did he evince any ungenerous recollection of Daniel's personal triumph over him, or of the more important ill results to which their quarrel had led. Nay, he even alluded to the whole matter in a smiling humility and good-humour, which at once surprised his former patron, and aroused his sincere regret on the score of the unmerited sufferings of the Haggarty family, in general.

Influenced by such feelings, Daniel, before entering on the particular object of his visit, condoled with Dinnis, and professed his friendship in any shape in which it could be serviceable. The answer he received somewhat corrected the warmth of his feelings. Dinny Haggarty, returning abundant thanks, stated that his father was already well provided with a situation ; that Attorney Doolly's new wife had hired Jinny, as a house-servant ; and that the Attorney himself wished Dinnis also to enter into his employment.

Daniel now speedily changed the topic, and opened the business upon which he had come. It was soon disposed of ; Haggarty readily named the farm, some miles distant, upon which the schoolmaster might be found, working as a labourer ;

and, with less cordiality of manner than they had met, the friends parted.

At day-break, next morning, Daniel was on his way to the place mentioned to him. Between six and seven o'clock he entered a large field, in which a number of men were digging. Of a little boy who lay stretched near the gap by which he came in, he asked after the person he wished so much to see. The urchin, evidently not knowing him, answered vaguely, as he glanced towards the labourers. Daniel also looked in the same direction, and observed that the greater part of them had stopped digging, and, leaning on their long-handled spades, watched him earnestly ; while one, in particular, seemed greatly interested, if not alarmed. Again he addressed the boy, who, saying he would make inquiries, ran off to the workmen. Daniel followed slowly. The courier gained the side of the most attentive individual of the group, said something in his ear, and, immediately, the frightened pedagogue threw down his spade, and fled from the field.

It took time and trouble to entice him back again : indeed, had not some of his present friends recognised Daniel upon a closer approach, perhaps he and his future pupil had never met at all ; for conscience made a coward of old Phelim O'Dea. Upon this occasion, he having lately undertaken, after much entreaty, and great reluctance, to teach the daughter of the farmer for whom he worked how to read certain letters which she was in the habit of receiving from a neighbour's son who was "seeking his fortune" in a foreign country.

Despatches from the working field reached Phelim, however, in his hiding-hole in the hills ; and when he became assured that Daniel was no village limb of the law, arrived to hand him over once more to fine and imprisonment, teacher and scholar at length stood face to face. It is admitted that Daniel felt inspired with little reverence by the appearance, manner, or physiognomy of this gifted person. His attire was as wretched as that of any primitive peasant around him : his air was timid, and redeemed only by the mannerism of his former profession from common vulgarity ; and, chiefly owing, no doubt, to the legal terror which had been stricken to his heart, his long, haggard face and powerless features had an abject expression.

Daniel invited him to turn apart, however ; and out of the poor man's respect for his family, and reliance upon its honour, more than by the help of a considerable fee, obtained Phelim's consent to become his writing-master. A solitary spot, half-

way between Hugh D'Arcy's home and the schoolmaster's present temporary residence, was appointed for their daily meetings : and before their parting, this morning, Daniel received a first lesson ; a little patch of sparkling sand, on the bank of the neighbouring stream, serving him for his copy-book, while his fore-finger did very well for a pen.

He returned home, and all that day distinguished himself at his other tasks, Dora Donovan preparing him for saying them, and even Helen now good-naturedly seconding her ; indeed it was sometimes necessary that she should. His hour for the evening appointment with old Phelim drew near ; he repaired to the place of rendezvous, and found the old man hiding behind some furze-bushes, not free from alarm. A rough slate and a piece of soft stone now took place of the sand and their fingers ; and the sky over their heads began to grow dusky, ere their lesson had ended. They were about to part when stealthy footsteps drew near, and the bushes around them rustled. The conscious statute-breaker, imposing silence and secrecy on his pupil, by a hasty sign, escaped in an opposite direction. Presently, a common bailiff, from the adjacent town, and some soldiers, surrounded Daniel ; and the former commanded him to tell what had become of old Phelim O'Dea. Dan stoutly denied all knowledge of such a person. The bailiff insisted that the schoolmaster had just been sitting at his side ; and before this also could be denied, pointed to the slate ; and then snatched up, covered as it was with interdicted "pot-books and hangers," that incontestable proof of legal delinquency.

The faithful pupil now changed his sturdy denials into as sturdy a silence. Enraged at the prospect of losing his reward as discoverer of a schoolmaster, the bailiff hurried off in pursuit of Phelim, leaving Daniel in charge with one of the soldiers. He returned to the little retreat without the wished-for prisoner, and threatened Daniel, on his own account, if he did not instantly tell where the fugitive might be found. Being answered only with the most contemptuous smiles, the mean assistant of the law proceeded to execute his threat. Calling Daniel his prisoner, he ordered the soldiers to take him into custody, and march him into the town.

"Why, you are a fool, man," said Dan, "for, though there is law against schoolmasters, there is none against scholars."

"We'll show you that," replied the man ; "come, tramp, and no more words."

Daniel, strong in his supposed exemption from legal punishment, foolishly resisted their commands. The result was, that

the disappointed "discoverer," indulging at once his personal and party feelings, and giving loose to his ruffianly nature, bound the boy's hands behind his back, with a ready cord, and pushed him out of the bushes, upon a path which led to the road into the town. Without a word,—but with a look at the contemned bailiff which, if it could, would have struck him dead—Daniel now forbore farther resistance, and, surrounded by his captors, stepped heavily and haughtily along the way he was to go.

CHAPTER VIII.

AND besides a sentiment of deep indignation and scorn towards his mean captor, other feelings of a more perilous tendency as regarded himself were on this occasion experienced by Daniel.

Amid all his consciousness of a want of intellectual cultivation equal to the pretensions of his birth and present rank in the world, he had never been abandoned by a certain sense of aristocratic pride, the more predominant, perhaps, because unattended by mental superiority. And this pride, in the first instance, was humbled almost to admitted degradation, at finding himself a prisoner, at the mercy of one of the lowest of mankind, bound with ropes, and followed by a crowd of idle and vulgar observers, along one of the high roads to the most important haunt of men with which, as yet, he was familiarly acquainted. He told his own heart that he could never again respect himself as he had done. Then came a worse reflection. In the very beginning of a renewed effort to improve his mind up to the station he held in the world, here he was once more flung back; and now, not by his own fault, but—he waywardly and darkly argued—by the interference of the unlucky fortune which, since his childhood, had, one way or other, come between him and knowledge. And with a bitter inward curse, Daniel almost resolved to abandon henceforward all endeavour to make himself wiser. It is hard to surmise how much of the sway of old habits, glad to find vent at any accidental opportunity, might have produced this unhappy resolve. But it can more easily be asserted that the thought of his young friend,

Dora Donovan—of his disappointed hope of rendering himself worthy of her respect—and of the exposure of the finesse to which he had had recourse in order to do so—he heightened the irritation of the mood in which he thus devoted himself to mental inferiority, and strange as it may seem, helped more than anything else to leave him reckless of the consequences of his vow.

Upon quitting the spot in which he had been detected by the bailiff and the soldiers, Daniel's great fear for an instant was, that they would conduct him close by his father's house. But, after proceeding some distance, he saw that he was to reach the town by a very different road. Fear of personal liability, beyond the disgraceful outrage now inflicted upon him, he did not entertain. It was only necessary, he thought, to gain the ear of the constituted authorities, and he should not only be set free, but obtain redress against the bailiff. But on this point he widely mistook.

His conductor, upon arriving in the streets of the town, where their rustic crowd was augmented by all the idlers within sight or hearing, brought him to the house of a magistrate, or, in more appropriate phrase, justice ; and, only waiting till the arrival of a second interpreter of the law, two being necessary on the occasion, there formally charged him with "refusing to give testimony, touching the abode of a popish schoolmaster;" which contumacy subjected the offender to a fine of twenty pounds ; or, in default of discharging such fine, to twelve months imprisonment in jail. The accuser stated his case. Daniel, being called upon to defend himself, would still say nothing. This ascertaining of the real law of the land added to his angry sullenness. Then he was called upon to pay the twenty pounds ; and, answering that he could not put down twenty shillings, the bailiff took charge of him to the common prison.

Daniel entered the wretched haunt of crime, with feelings of unabated recklessness ; almost of despair. An application to his family would soon produce his liberation, by ensuring a prompt satisfaction of the fine ; but in his headstrong and untutored frame of mind, he resolved not to send, or authorize the sending of, any information to his father or mother. And here, again, perhaps an almost puerile sensitiveness kept him from acting as he ought to have done, rather than any high-minded contempt of, or indifference to his situation. In fact, he may be said to have dreaded more an exposure of the primary cause of the dilemma, than the trials to which it might

still subject him : that is, he would, at this moment, at least, have preferred a year's imprisonment to the shame of having it known to Dora and Helen Donovan, and their father, that his whole misfortune originated in secretly engaging a hedge-schoolmaster to enable him to keep his promise (when his sprained thumb should be well) of exhibiting a proof of his skill in penmanship.

So short-sighted were Daniel's reasonings, nor could he command even sufficient cool sense to foresee, that notwithstanding all his heroic resolves of self-immolation, the news of his arrest and imprisonment must very soon reach his family.

And, in fact, it did reach them in a few hours ; and, early next morning, a third justice summoned to a second consideration of his offence the two wise men who had already pronounced upon it. This individual was a relation of Mrs. D'Arcy ; of course, a member not of Daniel's mode of worship ; indeed, the fact of his bearing a commission of the peace, in these times, tells as much ; but he was also a man whom no accidental distinctions could make unjust, illiberal, or precipitate in the adjustment of a party question ; and at the call of the bewildered Hugh D'Arcy, who came flourishing his stick to his door, Mr. Mossop readily embraced the cause of his young cousin.

At the renewed inquiry, however, there was no getting rid of the facts deposed to by the bailiff, and confirmed by Daniel's continual silence ; and the offender escaped from the clutches of the statute only by a legal flaw, which his advocate happily discovered. It had been enacted that any person of Daniel's persuasion, arraigned for his offence, should be eighteen years of age ; upon application to his father, and afterward to the registry of his birth, it was established that he was not yet quite so far advanced towards years of legal discretion ; thus he appeared, on the present occasion, not to be an accountable person ; and with many shakes of the hand bestowed upon Mr. Mossop, Hugh D'Arcy led home his redeemed and enfranchised son.

All was joy, under his father's roof, at Daniel's reappearance ; Helen and Dora Donovan, and their grave parent, appearing as much delighted as Mrs. D'Arcy, and her group of servants and household dependents. But no one could tell why Daniel himself neither smiled, nor spoke a word of greeting, in return for the smiles and caresses with which he was accosted ; for no one could tell how deeply the iron had entered his soul ; how the sense of personal degradation, of

hopes and prospects, decreed to be darkened for ever ; of the treble deepening of the old shadow of fatality over his mind and heart ; how all this had made him careless of escape from suffering, and dark amid the gladsome. In fact, none could surmise that from the events of the last few hours, his character and life had taken a hue and a direction, which threatened to be never-fading and uncontrollable.

Are these details of many slight causes, which gradually formed the feelings and bent of a human being, unimportant ? Do the feelings seem too much insisted upon ? are they too gravely exhibited, considering the almost puerile sources from which they flow, or the boyish years of the person who experiences them ? Even at the hazard of having this thought by some, the present little history must proceed as it stands.

It scarce surprised Mrs. D'Arcy that Daniel should seem careless of studious application the day following his escape from prison. But his apathy for many succeeding days seriously alarmed her. Every temptation to improve his mind was held out in vain. Unrestricted intercourse with his favourite Dora, although contrary to his mother's original plan, was permitted, but produced no beneficial effect. The good lady remarked, with surprise, that he even avoided ordinary meetings and conversation with her young visiter. And now she watched him and studied him, but felt herself less able than ever to comprehend the nature of her moody Daniel. He sought none of his former blameable enjoyment, yet he would substitute none for them : in fact, he would only lounge in the sun, or oversleep himself, or walk about near to the house, silent and brooding.

But something soon happened to stir him into energy, at least, although it was not of the description his mother would have preferred to see him evince. And in proceeding to mention this new matter, it is regretted that the complexion of the time of the story unavoidably forces into notice another allusion to penal enactment. This would be avoided, if possible ; but so domesticated, we may say, was the statute-book of former days, at the very fire-sides of the Irish people ; so literally was it the text from which they read every thing they were permitted to do ; and so fully and minutely did it command their feelings, their passions, their hopes, and their prospects, that in rehearsing, as in the present instance, the fortunes of persons living under its sway, fact and nature must be departed from, if they be said to have taken one important step independent of it.

The D'Arcys and their visitors were sitting after dinner, when a group of tenants, of a respectable class, came before the parlour-windows, and desired to speak with "the master." Hugh readily granted the interview; and after a good deal of vehement conversation, Daniel collected the following details.

At the time that Hugh D'Arcy purchased his estate, it was, as has been noticed, well-farmed, and equally profitable to him and his tenants. Hitherto, under the former proprietor, the men, or their fathers, had held long leases, protected by which, they had, for their own sakes, cultivated their grounds to the utmost. When Hugh D'Arcy became their landlord, those leases had nearly run out; but he engaged to grant renewals for ninety-nine years at the proper time, and thus encouraged to continued industry, his farmers still felt an interest in the improvement of his estate. But, before Hugh could fulfil his promise, a statute of Anne interdicted him from doing so, declaring all Roman Catholics incapable of holding any lease for any term exceeding thirty-one years. This was awkward enough. But, as if to prohibit an adventurer from taking advantage of his own exertions, even during so limited a space of time, a clause followed, by which, if a farm produced a profit greater than one-third of its rent, the lessee's right in it was immediately to cease, and to pass over to the first individual of the established creed who should discover the rate of profit.

These regulations produced on Hugh D'Arcy's estate the same results which flowed from them all over the country. They put a stop to the cultivation, eagerly begun towards the end of William's reign, and which promised fair to amend the national ravages of a civil war just subsided. Catholic farmers, seeing themselves deprived of long and advantageous holdings, and even from the profits which they might hope to amass under short tenures, ceased to be agriculturists, and commenced graziers. Lands were no longer drained and enclosed; good houses were no longer built on them, or those previously standing repaired; pastureage wasted the fields, which were virtually forbidden to be cultivated; and the real yeomen of Ireland sunk in the scale of social importance, and along with becoming poor, grew indolent and apathetic in pursuits which required little industry and less labour.

In the first instance, indeed, Hugh D'Arcy found that, so soon as their old leases dropped, many of his best tenants altogether declined taking renewals at the term prescribed by law, but, preferring emigration to poverty at home, abandoned their native country, and sought elsewhere a freer soil to reward

their labours. Those who came in their stead, under leases of thirty years, or old lessees who remained, pursuant to the same covenant, were unable from the outset to pay him the usual rents, and he, along with them, became a poorer man. From year to year they still fell off, or else threw up their tenures in despair, and absconded, leaving some of his once most productive farms unoccupied, as well as exhausted, and run wild. And, day after day, things had been growing worse with the tenants who still struggled for an existence upon his estate, until the evening in question, when the group, who appeared at the parlour windows, proved to be composed of the men in whom almost his last hopes rested, but who now came to obtain a yet more considerable reduction of rent, under the threat of following the example of former friends, and emigrating in a body, if their proposition should be refused.

Hugh D'Arcy had no choice but compliance. The men departed ; and a serious gloom naturally fell upon the party they left behind. The impoverished landholder, in particular, gave way to an overflowing of weak lamentations and miserable forebodings. Daniel was silent, but his mind and spirits were highly roused. At length, after holding his head down till his father had exhausted himself ; "I never knew," he said, quietly, "that the grounds were running to waste, for want of a tenant."

"But they are, you fool," answered Hugh ; "and to save us all from wanting a roof to cover us, I suppose I must turn farmer, and till them myself."

"I want to speak a word with you abroad, sir," resumed Daniel ; and he stood up and walked out of the house.

"And what has the lazy booby got in his wig-block, now?" conjectured Hugh, as he followed him. They met in the garden.

"This is it, father," continued Dan : "I'm young, and strong, and fit for nothing else : send me to one of the old farm-houses, for you, and let me try what I can do in regard of something for the bread I now ate in idleness."

"Why, then, good luck attend your notion, lad, and my blessing," answered Hugh, after he had stared at him.

"Then suppose I sleep in the Red House this very night, just to be on the spot, early in the morning, sir?"

"I don't think you could do a better thing," assented his surprised and delighted parent.

"Then, *bannecht-lath*,* sir ;"—and, having shaken his father's hand, he was hurrying off.

* Good night.

"Stay, Dan—won't you step in till we talk to the mother about it?" asked Hugh.

"What's the use, sir? you can give your own consent on your own business, sure; and I'll be over to-morrow noon, to see my mother, and Mr. Donovan, and—and all; so, a good evening, father dear." He disappeared, leaving Hugh gazing after him in amazement, which now began to change into doubts of the propriety of the step for which he had given permission; of Dan's capability for the task he had undertaken; of the soundness of his mind, recollecting the sudden and strange manner in which he had embraced the project; and, above all, of Mrs. D'Arcy's approval of the whole measure.

Leaving to a future page some account of the sentiments of his good mother, however, upon the new career he was about to begin, Daniel is followed to the Red House—once the dwelling of the most considerable of his father's old tenants, but since that person had deserted it, allowed to get out of repair. The boy hurried along the paths which led him to its door. A neighbour supplied him with a candle and fresh straw for the night, and he flung himself upon his humble couch, highly excited: and yet, when he asked the question, he could not tell why. But there floated through his brain, and throbbed in his heart, vague notions and feelings of triumph over his failure in higher pursuits by devoting himself to humbler ones: "Let me play a part, though it degrade me," was one of his reveries; "ay, let me be useful as a beast of the field, since I am doomed by nature and every one about me," (this last sweeping accusation was in reality directed only at the bailiff,) "never to be fit for such company as Mr. Donovan's: never to be a grandee, like him,—or like Marks!" he continued: then he ran on to think what a favoured child of fortune Marks was, and, for the first time in his life, he momentarily envied if not disliked his brother; and, however it was produced, a picture of Marks and Dora Donovan sitting together, in his father's garden, rose before him; and he started up in a kind of fury.

"But, to be sure, and why not," he resumed; "he would be the fitter for her. I can never look up to Dora. I am a clown—a clod of the earth. And yet, only the other morning, how I did feel as if it was in me to deserve her! and only for that turn with Phelim O'Dea,—curse on them all!—I won't think of it. I'm a farmer, new, and to go with red hands, and wear brogues, from the to-morrow, out. Well, 'twill be something at any rate. And I'm quit of the people at home,

for a start—that's a comfort. They won't be looking in my face, and wondering to themselves when will my thumb be well enough to—to write out a fair copy for them!—Pish! what nonsense!"—and he was surprised by sleep as this last thought occurred—"ay, ay; I'm near hand to a man, now, and 'tis time I did something like a man, for my livelihood: and I'll be working for my mother, too."

CHAPTER IX.

THE kind of soliloquy with which the last chapter ended, will be of use in giving a clue to Daniel's actions henceforward.

At a very early hour he arose, solemnly prepared to commence his new calling of farmer with the proper energy and spirit. A boyish affectation of steadiness and seriousness was on his brow, in his manner, and in his step: in fact, he would be taken by all who looked on him for a man of business: saying, at the same time, to his own heart, "under this will I hide from every eye, the gnawing I feel within, but which never shall be acknowledged."

In one point of view, he certainly was not disqualified for the pursuits in which he proposed to engage. His desultory habits of life had, all along, often sent him to dissipate his time among his father's tenants in the labouring field: and although Daniel's hand had never guided the plough, the scythe, or the sickle, nor his mind had in charge the direction and superintendence of a group of workmen, still he had unconsciously acquired sufficient knowledge both of the practice and theory of farming, to give him tolerable pretensions to succeed as a tiller of the earth. So, abundance of idle hands being soon found near and all around him, to call to his counsels after morning dawn, Daniel and they were actually at high work before noon tide.

He had told his father he should go home to see "his mother and Mr. Donovan, *and all*," that day. This promise, however, he did not keep. He shrank with a mixture of puerile shamefacedness and rankling passion from every one at present under his father's roof. "No," he resolved absurdly though doggedly, "from this day out, they must invite me

before I go—if I *do* go, even for that—because I'm not their equal any longer—" there was another reason, but he would not admit it.

As the day wore on without a visit or a message from home, he began to feel very downcast, notwithstanding this determination ; and his next turn of temper was into gall and bitterness. "They take me at my word ; they let me run my own path ; ay, they *do* call to mind already that a distance should be kept between ladies and genteels, and the young farmer."

He engaged in his field occupations with more energy, putting forth his young strength to astonish as well as to help his workmen ; and, " Yes, and little it troubles them at the great house what I'm to have with the dry potatoe for my dinner," he continued ; the prospect of a really homely meal, for the first time in his life, not at all rendered indifferent by Daniel's heroism.

Some time before the usual dinner hour at "the great house," he saw a female coming towards his farm, along a steep path down a hill at a distance. The figure looked like his careful chambermaid, Nancy ; but gratified as his humour was by the circumstance, he would not afford a second observation to make sure, because he scorned being thought anxious about the approach of any one from a quarter of which he was so jealous ; so he kept pacing from one to the other of his workmen, pointing their attention here and there and everywhere, and using emphatic action for Nancy's edification, if indeed Nancy looked on. But time enough elapsed for her arrival at his side, and the supposed ambassador of kind greetings and condescending entreaties appeared not. He glanced from under his eyebrows, over the surrounding fields, and towards the farm-house, still she was not visible. He condescended to raise his head, and look about in good earnest, but with no better success. But as, stamping his foot smartly, he was about to resume his important occupations with increased spirit, he caught a glimpse of a woman's hooded head through some wild bushes in a near fence, attentively regarding him and the bustling throng at his side. Again he would not vouchsafe any show of interest, or even of recognition ; and, finally, the observer withdrew, and was not afterward to be seen. In truth, Nance it was. Mrs. D'Arcy had resolved, in consequence of mature thought, to indulge Daniel in his new fancy, so far as to let him tire himself by a morning of unusual bodily exertion : she depended upon seeing him, and, of course, of conferring with him, however, according to his

voluntary promise to his father ; when he did not appear, the lady became uneasy and offended together ; if nothing but his continued sulkiness kept him away, she resolved to allow him to break his engagement as openly and as long as he liked ; and in order to ascertain how the case really stood, Nancy was despatched, after many cautions, as a reconnoitrier and a spy to the hostile ground. And various were Nancy's feelings as, muffling her head in her cloak, she looked in through the dilapidated fence. From old habit, and an arbitrariness of affection peculiar, it is presumed, to her countrymen and countrywomen, she had been and was very angry with him for "making such a raal omadhaun of his mother's son, as to kick up his heels and quit the ould house, and the good livin' an' lyin' in it, an' the pleasant nothin' to do—" (though few of his friends oftener declaimed against his idleness than Nancy,) "to turn small farmer ;" but when she gazed at him walking about in so manly a style, among his people, and heard his loud and "knowledgable" words of command to them, and marked his sturdy gesticulations and important face and gait, her anger gave way to admiration, and arose to a feeling of patronage, and to unbounded pity that his lot was about to become so laborious a one, and, above all, that she durst not proceed to break her mistress's solemn instructions, by jumping into the field, pouncing upon him, scolding him, and dragging him off to "the good male he was used to." Fear of Mrs. D'Arcy's awful anger suppressed, however, her amiable impulses. After storing up in her mind enough and more than enough, for a communication at home, Nance stole off from her spy-hole, and cautiously took her way to her mistress.

And thus, by indulging different misconceptions, and by each too pertinaciously insisting upon a plan, Daniel and his mother were likely to become worse friends than ever. Mrs. D'Arcy sat down to her dinner without seeming to take farther notice of him ; but it was a comfortless feast. Almost every one engaged in it were more or less disagreeably affected by Daniel's stubborn conduct. The mother's own feelings need not be farther expressed. Hugh D'Arcy, recovering from an humbled tone of manner, the result of his wife's dignified ex-postulations with him, as the unreflecting abettor of their son's wayward whim in the first instance, to the obvious detriment of the higher arrangements in the lad's favour, which Hugh himself had so recently approved. Hugh D'Arcy spared few words of strong reproach of the absent truant, and vehemently

advised leaving him, for a week or two, to the discipline of hard work, and potatoes and thick-milk. Mr. Donovan, little affected by the incident itself, which, in the certainty that Daniel would soon grow wiser, he thought of no importance, deeply sympathized in the circumstances which had given it birth, namely, the visit of the distressed tenants to his host, and the decay of worldly independence it too plainly proclaimed. Helen, partly on the same account, partly that no one would smile or laugh around her, so as to tolerate her smile or laugh, sat gravely, for one of the very first times in her life. And Dora, thinking chiefly of the "hard work, and potatoes and thick-milk," decreed to her poor champion and fellow-student, was, perhaps (it will hint the quality of her mind as well as of her heart, if it hint nothing else), the most afflicted of the party.

But, soon after dinner, Mrs. D'Arcy's heart relented. Nancy was again summoned and ordered to fill a basket with food, and half a bottle of light wine ; and to her great delight, she then set out, treading in her mistress's footsteps, along the same path she had, that day, already traversed.

Meantime, Daniel had determined not to have any dinner at all. A neighbour, or rather a neighbour's wife, a poor peasant-woman, sent him in a share of her own and her husband's meal, composed of the very materials his father had doomed him to, namely, potatoes and thick-milk ; but he let the potatoes grow cold, and the thick-milk become half decomposed into greenish water, and magnanimously—starved. The hour came for dismissing his men from their day task, and he was left alone. Retiring to his unfurnished, or but miserably-furnished apartment in the Red House, he flung himself, stif-fened with bodily fatigue, as well as hungry and thirsty, upon his straw couch, and looked out through the open window.

His window commanded a view of the hill, adown which he had that day seen Nancy approaching his farm. As his eye now listlessly wandered over its path, he again descried his former attendant, for now he was sure of her identity, trotting after his mother, who moved along at a quick, though lengthened and dignified pace. In a flutter of feelings he started up from his recumbent position, and, strange as it sounds, his first impulse was to engage in the immediate destruction of his hitherto neglected dinner ; for at a second glance, Daniel comprehended the meaning of the basket on Nancy's arm, and he thought it an important point, a becoming show of independence in his altered situation, to be enabled to decline the dainty

fare destined for him at this late hour, by being found just finishing his own more suitable supply of food : perhaps, after all his resolves, he was not sorry of an excusable opportunity for dining on something or other.

According to a judicious timing of his efforts, he held the last cold potatoe of a considerable heap in his hand, and was swallowing the last draught of very sour milk, when Mrs. D'Arcy entered his new residence, carrying the basket on her own arm ; she had left Nancy below, out of sight and bearing, much against Nancy's will and anticipation. Daniel now began to play a little of the hypocrite ; in his words and manner, as he arose, there was, first, an affectation of surprise, as if he had not at all noticed his mother's approach to the Red House ; next, of the utmost happiness at seeing her in it, together with a swaggering ease which meant to assert that he was comfortable, nay, delighted in consequence of all he had done, and all he meant to do.

" You were expected home to dinner, Daniel," said Mrs. D'Arcy, after she had accepted of the only crazy seat her independent son was able to offer her.

" I did not know it, mother dear," he answered, smiling an untruth. She partly saw through this new mood of his, and thought it better not to irritate him by contradiction on small points.

" Well, Dan, boy, I am sorry you mistook ; however, when you did not come, and when we were obligated to sit down to our meal without you, for the first time, Daniel," her voice varied from its usual steadiness ; " why, then, Dan, I got Nancy to follow me with this basket."

" Many thanks, mother ; but my dinner is over for to-day—enough and plenty of it—and, more betoken, the kind I ought to begin to make myself used to :"—as he said these last words he again smiled, looking into his mother's face ; but she saw it was a struggling smile ; that bitterness of heart was under it, and tears ready to drown it. Still she tried to sooth him, and if possible beguile him into a better temper by seeming unconsciousness and passive mildness. Not that she did not want his tears ; she did ; but tears of a different kind from those now ready to gush up. " Youth, and good health, and exercise, Daniel, need not to be dainty about dinner-fare, I grant you ; and so Nancy may take home my poor basket, again—if, indeed, it contain no little relish that might prove palatable to you after an ordinary meal." .

"No mother, I thank you kindly : I have not a stomach for any thing after the good potatoes."

"Except for your usual draught of wine, Dan."

"No, indeed : the milk served the turn, to-day : and it and the *cups** agree very well together ; only they might quarrel with genteeler company."

"Well, well, Dan : are you fully ready to come home with me ?"

"Sure I am at home, mother dear : one that looks after a farum has a right to keep on the spot."

"So you prefer sleeping here, Daniel ?"

"Troth, mother, and it becomes me, I think."

"Very well : but we must send you over your *own* bed and bedding, in that case :" she took care to lay an emphasis on the word "own," which had the desired effect upon his childish sulk, for he answered—"thanks, mother."

"And any matters else, at the same time, Daniel ? Your papers—*Marks' letters*—or your books ?"

"Marks' letters, if you please, mother—but none of the ould books—they are not in *my way, now*."

"They might amuse you of an idle hour."

"'Tis not likely I shall have many idle hours : or if so it happens, out of the field itself, sure I have other things to think of."

"Well, that will give pleasure to few of us at home : now, here is a book with a leaf folded down in it by Dora Donovan, and she sends you word to look over a hard sentence, and tell her if—"

"Nonsense !" interrupted Daniel, striding about the room—"I ask your pardon, mother ; but what can she, or yourself, or any one mean but a laugh at me to talk of such a thing ? Hard sentence, *inagh* !†—I say, over again, mother, I have nothing to do with the book, or with any book, nor ever can, nor with whomever sent it, nor with any bookish people—for, you see, mother—tut, tut !"—his little strife of feelings making him as usual vehement—"my heavy hatred in all such *raumaush*,‡ and to the ould boy I toss it !"

Mrs. D'Arcy now nearly lost her self-command : in other words—apart altogether from her maternal feelings, which were strong and pure as a mother's could be—her *plan* of forbearance for the present had nearly yielded to her vexation, lest another and a more important and complicated plan should

* A species of potato.

† Indeed.

‡ Absurdity.

eventually be marred by Daniel's continued unmanageableness. She checked her rising indignation, however, and allowed him to conjecture her sentiments only by her silence and by her assumed toleration of his rude speech. Then she hoped he would accuse himself of abruptness, and apologize to her; but she miscalculated: he was roused upon a point which did not allow him to grow cool so soon again; and after a pause of some time, while he continued to pace about the room, she found herself compelled to resume, and, indeed, to shorten the interview.

"I hope, at least, Daniel, that you will accompany me some part of the way home, as the dark has fallen."

With hearty expressions of alacrity and dutiful eagerness, Daniel snatched his hat, and led his mother down to the entrance door of the house. There they found Nancy. The girl, as she took the basket from Mrs. D'Arcy, opened its covering, and having peered in, raised up her eyes and one of her hands, and then with a sadly reprehensive and prophetic manner, shook her head at her wayward young master. Without a word, however, the party left the Red House. And without a word they gained a near view of Daniel's old home.

Here he broke silence, stopping as he spoke. "Is this far enough to see you safe, mother?"—"Why, yes, Dan, if you are bent on going back to the farm."

"Indeed and I am, mother, and must, for the farum's sake, if nothing else; only I won't turn back without your blessing, mother dear, the way it always was, you know, and always will be with me, from the heart out, and why not?"

He knelt as simply and earnestly as he had done when he was but seven years old. The little incident, and particularly the manner of it, affected Mrs. D'Arcy, as well as did the rapid reflection that, however warped for a season in some parts, was her son's heart, its whole nature remained unchanged, and, she believed, unchangeable. And had she given way to the affection that now swelled in her bosom, doubtless she could have charmed up the very kind of tears she had wished to draw from Daniel, in the first instance. But, in deference to quite a new project, the stately lady pronounced her blessing in a way that expressed only the dignity of affection, and she and he parted for the night without noticing a tear of any kind upon each other's lids. Gazing after him, as he slowly descended a hill to his solitary house, in the increasing darkness, the following were the thoughts which explained to herself Mrs. D'Arcy's motives for so acting.

"To soften him now would be doing no good, would not really overcome his obstinacy, would not make him sleep under his father's roof, at the same time it would be a lavishing of my power of appeal over him, and of his own susceptibility for being perfectly moulded to our wishes. The next visiter to *his farm* shall succeed better than I have done. He loves the child in his very heart of hearts, although according to that wilful way of his own, and so far as her years allow of the sentiment, I think *she* loves *him*. We shall see. But, first of all, let him remain alone, since he so much insists on it ; 'twill prepare him."

Pursuant to the last resolve, Daniel was not intruded upon the following day by any one from home, excepting the man who came with his "own bed and bedding," and some other useful pieces of household furniture which he could not well throw out at the window, although he was strongly inclined to do so. Not even a basket visited him, impertinently stuffed with good things. All of a sudden, however, the poor people of the cabin nearest to him found themselves able to supply him with a dinner and a breakfast better than those of the day before ; and if Daniel wondered at the change, or suspected a clew to its mystery, he held his tongue, after a few unsatisfied questions, and allowed himself to eat and drink as he had used to do, in spite of all his visions of independence. Very high-flying people often act similarly in parallel situations.

His solitude remained undisturbed for yet another day ; and Daniel pursued his labours unremittingly, although at last he could have sat down in a corner of the field and cried like the boy he was. After breakfast hour, upon the fourth day of his new era, he descried, however, his father and Mr. Donovan approaching his farm. As in the case of Nancy's visit, he pretended not to be aware of their coming, but put forth all his powers to make a display for their admiration.

They met ; and after greeting, Hugh D'Arcy took up a part, which, under the instructions of his wife, he had come resolved to enact. None of his late ill-humour against Daniel's whim was permitted to appear ; on the contrary, he praised in the very highest terms the extraordinary and almost inconceivable good results of the young farmer's industry during the short space of three days. Mr. Donovan echoed his eulogiums moderately, but emphatically ; and now, at least, Mrs. D'Arcy's anticipations were fulfilled. "Let us put him in good-humour even with his present exercise of his capacities, in order afterward to wile him out of it into higher attempts,"

had been the good lady's theory ; and the first part of it certainly took effect. Aware of his father's and of Mr. Donovan's knowledge of farming, Daniel triumphed in his own success, as much from a feeling of mere gratified vanity, as on account of any of his stubborn humours. In fact, he felt a little returning pleasantness of disposition ; and, had he been invited to accompany his visitors home to dinner, would very probably have gone. But no such compliment was paid to him. On the contrary, his father asked what he could give him and his friend by way of luncheon, and Daniel, sending a hasty message to his purveying neighbours, made what arrangements he might ; and, soon after, blundered through the novel duties of a host in his crazy and unfurnished farm-house. They bade him adieu, still without an invitation ; yet still he remained pleased, when left alone, at the thought of the respect he commanded in his independent situation, and quite assured that, at the proper time, his hospitality would be duly and not undeservedly acknowledged, in a neighbourly way :

And had his mother taken as granted, according to rule, that such good effects could so speedily have been produced in him, no doubt he would have immediately been flattered by the attentions he now so much desired. But she was for proceeding gradually in all things. First, she advised the sending him a neighbourly present of wine, which, in consideration of a polite message, Daniel accepted. Then Mr. Donovan requested him to try some of his venison and fowls ; and next—and here Mrs. D'Arcy really merits praise—the Misses Donovan sent to inquire after their young friend's health, adding, as a remembrance of their good-will, specimens, out of their father's gardens, of the fruit then in season. This fruit happened to be divided into two parcels, though one hamper contained it ; and the wrapper of the first parcel was labelled, "Helen's own pulling," and the wrapper of the second, "Dora's own pulling ;" and Dora's lay under Helen's, so that it must have been last taken out. The same night Daniel supped upon fruit ; nay, brought some to bed with him, and ate it in the dark—out of which parcel ?

The following morning his hitherto admiring and astonished workmen observed that he did not seem so light-hearted or ready-handed in the field. Before the hour of dismissing them in the evening, a ragged girl came to say that he was wanted in the Red House. In answer to his anxious inquiries as to his visiter or visitors, the messenger only giggled, blushed, and ran away. He entered his only sitting-room, and found the Misses

Donovan seated at a table, on which was prepared a delicate evening meal, while Nancy stood hard by, the arranger, it was evident, as well as furnisher of the viands ; for she held between her hands a platter, yet destined for the board, and the basket he had formerly seen, lay in a corner of the apartment.

As he came in, Helen Donovan was laughing loudly and gayly ; Dora Donovan, half-seriously chiding, in her low, rich, cooing voice ; and Nancy declaiming to the utmost of her power. Daniel's surprise, delight, awkwardness, and still lingering sullenness, together with his reception of his new guests, may be imagined from former manifestations of his character. The elder of the young ladies tripped lightly to meet him at the door, and extended her hand, laughing still ; the younger rose from her chair, made a low obeisance, and did not look at him ; Nancy dropped many quick courtesies of mock salutation and reverence to "the man of the house ;" and while in the action described, Helen said—"Don't blame *us*, sweet sir—me or my poor sister, I mean ; Nancy here proposed a ramble after dinner, with our father's permission, and with your good mother's too,—and, in truth and word we scarce knew where we were until she compelled us to sit down in your romantic house."

"Thru for you, Miss Helen : just took a start of a thought of my own, to make ye all have a laugh from the heart out together," said Nancy ; and she uttered a whole untruth, while Helen's had been but a half one.

"Master Daniel D'Arcy will not surely suppose that we could have intentionally come of a sudden upon him in this way," said Dora persuading herself she was quite innocent.

"And just brought a bite an' a sup to make ourselves welcome, more betoken," added Nancy, imagining that she not only kept within the limits of true courtesy, but shone in her observance of all of its rules.

The little stolen feast—not unlike one that the merest children sometimes get up at school—was gone through ; Helen proposed that Daniel should exhibit his grounds to her sister and herself, attended and chaperoned by Nancy. The party accordingly left the Red House. At first, Helen, Dora, and Daniel walked together. Sometime after the elder of the young ladies stayed behind with Nancy, to understand some remarks volunteered by that sagacious person upon some remarkable object in view, and Dora and the young farmer stayed on, side by side. An hour must have elapsed before they heard Nancy's voice loudly calling their names, in accents of reproof, real or feigned, as well as in those of alarm. The

shrill sounds echoed all around them through a very lonely little glen, built up at either side with shattered, white-faced rocks, and sweeps of crumbling earth, plumed by dwarf trees; a small rivulet, sent to them from a far-up mountain source, broke its way, in tiny eddies and fairy foaming, over a stone-strewed bed at their feet; and the setting sun poured his full glory upon their little valley, along the vista, into which, at one end, it receded, and which, with its hundred bold or rich features of hills and trees, was confused and seemed enchanted under his influence: so at least thought Daniel, and such were his recollections to his dying day of the inanimate accompaniments and witnesses of his words and actions of that evening: the little unimportant scene, he thought—*felt* rather—grew more expressive than outward nature, in any of her varieties, had ever before appeared to his eye; and never, never could he forget the spot—never cease to love it, to revisit it; and coming into it, and casting his eye around him, was like—almost in reality *was*—calling up one happy thought, upon whose stirring depended a whole bustle of joyous recollections.

“Romance.” Well, serious sir. Attend to plainer facts. Dora and Daniel heard Nancy’s peacock cries, and they started from a seat which both had occupied, looking like guilty things warned from crime; but although a notion of crime had not sullied the minds of either, it was now too late to be warned from what had really engaged them; for, mere boy and girl as they were, they had by this time utterly given each other away to each other; simply though unreservedly avowing a love never surpassed, if it can be equalled, by man’s love for woman, or woman’s love for man.

“I declare to my gracious goodness, now, and bad manners to me!” cried Nancy when at length she stood before them; “but it’s what is come into my head is this, now that I have found you, Miss Dora, and you Masther Daniel; ye were here, alone, together, all the while, so ye were, your two cheeks are so red—”

“Their four cheeks, you mean, Nancy,” interrupted Helen—

“Why, then yis, Miss Helen, and the eyes o’ them dancin’ jigs, out o’ thair heads more betoken—well, if I don’t tell the mistress, *nau bocklish!*”*

“Don’t now, Nancy, good girl, don’t,” pleaded Daniel, in a boyish fright.

But Nancy did tell; and not to “the mistress’s” great dissatisfaction either.

* Never mind.

CHAPTER X.

"HE will walk over to dinner to-morrow," was Mrs. D'Arcy's conclusion, after she had heard from Nancy the result of their joint conspiracy against poor Daniel's peace of mind. He did so ; and the next day, and the next—still attending to his agricultural pursuits, however, until Mr. Donovan and his daughters prepared to end their visit at Hugh D'Arcy's, and return to their own house: Upon the last evening of their stay, Daniel and Dora were surprised, by their mother and father, sitting so close together, and so remarkably engaged in other respects, that few doubts of their sentiments towards each other could be entertained in the breasts of even the least watchful parents.

The young pair arose, and stood in almost childish confusion, looking to the ground. Mrs. D'Arcy and her grave companion seemed surprised and somewhat shocked in common, and, in a low and remonstrating voice, the latter pronounced Dora's name, advanced to her, and led her out of the garden ; for in the garden did this scene occur. Daniel, losing his sheepfaced expression, followed them with his great blue eyes till they disappeared through the door ; and then turning to his mother, who now stood at his side, looked up into her face spiritedly, and said, "Now, will Dora get blame, I wonder?"

Mrs. D'Arcy did not know : could not conjecture ; hoped the young gentlewoman did not merit it ; Daniel knew best ; but, in fact, she presumed that he had prevailed upon Miss Dora to listen to his expressions of interest in her regard ?"

"Interest in her regard!" repeated Daniel ; "If it's any harm to keep it from you, mother dear, I'll tell you, now, that Dora has heard me say,—ten thousand times over, that I love her, body and soul—so well and dearly—I cannot—I will not breathe the breath of life without her!"

"You are vehement, Daniel—

"I am, mother ; any thing you like, for I am in earnest,—In earnest, mother dear!"

"And what says Miss Dora?"

"What says she? oh, may the good God watch over her and reward her for ever, mother! Dora does not think of your poor

Dan as others do! She does not jeer him! Dora loves *me*, mother, as well as *I love her!* Dora loves *me!*" The appeal he could not speak was expressed in the weeping embrace he bestowed upon Mrs. D'Arcy.

Shedding tears herself, she soothed him, murmured promises of assistance in his ear, and kissed his high, broad, and man-like forehead through his flowing light-brown hair. Having thus prepared him to listen patiently, she told him that she herself would be his advocate with Mr. Donovan. At these words Daniel experienced the first instant of pure pleasure he had ever yet known. "Every one begins to love me, as I want to be loved!" was the thought which, lighting up and warming his soul like a sunbeam, produced this otherwise unproducible sentiment. His mother left him alone to go directly to Mr. Donovan.

Daniel could not tell how long it was until the garden-door again opened, and Mr. Donovan himself advanced towards him. The agitation now displayed by the lad was very different from that he had shown when detected sitting by Dora's side. He trembled under the influence of mature and deep passion. The old gentleman sat down near him, smiling gravely, and, could Daniel have observed, compassionately and graciously too. But his speech ended in little less than a death-sentence to the hopes of the poor listener.

He began by saying that, in good earnest, the idea of love between his younger daughter, who was little more than fifteen, and Daniel, who was scarce eighteen, could not or could hardly be entertained with a serious face. The unfitness of their ages for such an adventure was farther heightened by the reflection that, owing to circumstances which neither could help, the minds of both had been left, down to the present hour, sadly uncultivated and immatured. There was also another consideration, though of a kind little likely to be comprehended by a mere boy or girl, and therefore Mr. Donovan felt a degree of absurdity in his own conduct, in mentioning it: he would, however, remark that, under any circumstances, prudence required the admirer of his daughter Dora to be master of some means of adding to the limited independence to which, in the event of her father's death, she would be entitled.

Daniel, half jumping on his seat, gasping for breath, and proudly thinking of "his farm," was about to speak, but Mr. Donovan requested to be heard to the end of what he had to say. Then, continuing, he observed, in the first place,—that the fact of extreme youthfulness put an end to even the tolera-

tion of Daniel's suit for many years to come ; next, that if he and Dora were ever permitted to regard each other as lovers, it must be after successfully attending to the cultivation of their minds by every means left open to both ; and lastly—as regarded the question of property in some shape or other—Mr. Donovan did not indeed know how far respectable mental endowments might or might not dispose him to excuse the want of very great wealth in the husband of his Dora ; nay, he could not declare that a certain degree of literary acquirement might not induce him to overlook a deficiency of other qualifications altogether.

Had Daniel possessed half the shrewdness and knowledge of the world often attained even at his years, he would have quickly detected in this discourse new proofs of the now wide-spreading conspiracy laid against his indifference to literary study. But he took all he heard as plain matter of fact, occurring in the natural course of things, and was affected accordingly. He was overwhelmed. After all his failures through life ; after his late miserable failure ; recollecting his constant misgiving of *inability of will*, the attendant of his mind from childhood, and its inveterate confirmation within the last few weeks ; calling up also, his open, bravadoing abandonment of all "books and bookish people," since he turned small farmer, and anticipating how he must burn and shrink with shame should he now forsake his new and manly mode of life once more to sit down under a hedge in the field, or in the garden, or in his own solitary old room, to *learn to spell*, out of a book ; getting all this before him, Daniel decreed in his own heart and soul, that had Mr. Donovan proposed to him to take wings unto himself and fly up to the moon, the terms would not have been more impracticable and extravagant than those the good old gentleman really insisted upon.

" You hear me, and understand me, Daniel ?" asked Mr. Donovan, after his poor petitioner had sat a long while in deep silence, revolving these black thoughts.

" I do, sir—I do indeed, sir,"—answered Daniel, not raising his chin off his breast.

" Well, then, I will leave you to your own reflections upon what has been said,—for *they* must make your own fate :" and once more Daniel was alone in the garden.

" What does she say, herself ?"—were his thoughts, as he quickly arose, after a lengthened and brooding, and unprofitable reverie—" I will try and speak one word with Dora."

He walked round to the back of the house, and cautiously

- approached the kitchen window. Nancy appeared at a table inside, busied about some culinary work. He beckoned her out. The affectionate though whimsical and peculiar girl soon joined him. He confided an embassy to her ; she retired ; quickly came out again ; and now Nancy either was or pretended to be in a great remonstrative passion. It was a shame for him, she insisted, to have coaxed her into taking any such bad message, when he knew better than the whole house besides, how matters stood, and all of his own making ; when he need not be told that Miss Dora was in her room to stay there till she should go home, early in the morning : and his mother had very like to have bitten her (Nancy's) head off, for wanting to go up stairs ; only Mrs. D'Arcy herself would tell Daniel every thing if he stepped in, and took his supper and bed, as once he used to do ; and — here Daniel turned off, and walked without another word to his highly prized citadel, the Red House, and, notwithstanding his mother's invitation, took his bed—though not his supper—there, instead of under her roof.

Soon after break of day next morning, his workmen saw with delight and respect a rallied energy about him. Along with directing their exertions spiritedly and judiciously, once more it gladdened their hearts to observe him occasionally join in their bodily labours. Daniel's person was built for strength—one of the great idols of those who earn their bread solely by dint of bone and muscle ; and now, with that strength freshly come upon him, and excited almost to the degree which madness often imparts, he performed feats sufficient to make him immortal in his neighbourhood. The wondering peasants did not know, however, how much was owing to Daniel's mood ; how much exactly to the physical force with which he had naturally been endued. Less could they understand that mood, had it been mentioned to them ; a mood made up of fiery struggles for mastery between mind and the animal, just in the young vigour of both, when either must inevitably preponderate, and fashion man's character—identity—for ever.

Still according to rule, he was permitted by his friends at home to indulge this new fit without molestation or hinderance ; and still, according to nature, even after the subsiding of its first vehemence, it did not turn into the docility expected to be worked out by itself; but, in the absence of sympathy, of help, from any hearts whose love, and whose love alone could have accomplished a good change, it rather became an inward habitual disease of his moral constitution. For weeks they left him quite alone ; and, each day of each week he exhausted

himself in vulgar labour of the field ; and each night he lay awake, or but unhealthily dozing, fire in his brain, and his eyes unvisited by a tear. But—he *would* be the husband of Dora ! —no matter who gainsayed him—no matter though he lost father, mother, and brother for ever, he would take her from them. She loved him—why should they not come together ? —And with the energy of a young fiend he clenched his hands, as if to feel his own animal strength, and as if depending on it alone for triumph ; and visions of bearing her through a sea of fire, or similar slight impediments, seemed airy nothings to his passion-puffed notions of himself.

A continuance of these struggles, while at the same time he almost went without food, soon began to make inroads, however, upon the only power to which he would look for help and success. His cheeks grew pallid and sunken, his frame decayed, his voice sounded dry and hoarse ; he no longer outdid the strong men in their own field. His father and mother, hearing of his condition, quickly came to entreat him home with them. Interpreting their late injudicious neglect into estrangement of love and kindness—his stemmed passion for Dora Donovan drawing in its reflux all true feelings of his heart—he retreated to his house at their approach, locked himself in, and would not see them. When, after a thousand entreaties, and a long stay, they retired, he snatched up his hat, and acting upon a sudden impulse, hurried off to Mr. Donovan's.

It had lately come into Daniel's mind, in a very vague, and yet in a very imperative shape, (he would have it so), that, notwithstanding all that gentleman had spoken about intellectual qualifications, a little time, and a little wealth was all that it was really necessary to wait for in order to entitle him, Daniel, to be received as a tolerated suitor. Although his present phrensy had actually begun in believing Mr. Donovan sincere in his other condition, and in deeming himself incapable of meeting it, still, the more recent modification of his fit urged him to tread down, with a savage scorn, and as visionary in every way, because visionary to himself, the notion of winning Dora by virtue “of reading plainly out of a book, and writing out any thing, off-hand, like ould Phelim O'Dea.” In the hope, nay, the certainty, therefore, of convincing Mr. Donovan that he could wait patiently for a given number of years, and make himself a rich man in the mean time, Daniel now hastened to that gentleman's mansion.

Their interview was a short and memorable one. Daniel, pale and trembling from previous suffering and present hurry

and emotion, entered upon his wild statements with a vehemence that at first almost frightened his hearer, and Mr. Donovan was very near forgetting his promises to Mrs. D'Arcy of rigidly abetting "her plan," as well as his own temperate convictions of the necessity of making a last effort for the mental advantage and future happiness of his own daughter along with his friend's son. Checking his nervousness, however, he firmly repeated all that he had formerly said to the youthful lover;—nay, he insisted more than he had done before upon the very condition which Daniel would jump over. The lad, overcome by the fury of his temper, and the unhealthy excitement of his frame, dashed the bat which he had hitherto held in his hand upon the floor, declaimed louder, stamped, shook in every limb, and finally staggered and fell; and that night he lay in his father's house, having been conveyed home on a litter, the possessing passion of his heart finding vent in the ravings of a fever.

Restored to reason and to health by the united aids of his robust constitution and a mother's love and care, Daniel felt himself softened in temperament, and even ashamed of what he could recollect of the extravagance which had immediately preceded, and indeed chiefly caused his dangerous indisposition. In the experience always left behind after violent excitement, he formed many good and wise resolutions of future self-government and amiability. In his gentle and grateful words and sentiments towards her, his mother read the happy inward changes going forward, while he yet lay in bed, feeble and motionless, though indeed snatched from death. But Daniel's feelings for Dora had not suffered one iota of diminution during all this taming of other violent emotions and sentiments. His love remained even as vehement as ever, though not likely, at least, without fresh and increased provocation, to show itself in acts of sullen obstinacy or mad impatience. It grew more hopeless, too, because he grew more capable of admitting the reasonableness and strength of the barrier opposed to it. In the calmness of his sick-chamber, he re-considered Mr. Donovan's proposition, and still despairing of ever being able to entertain it, he assented to its justice. This other state of his mind and heart, Daniel's mother also conjectured; and still she was pleased, because still she studied to take advantage of it, although now compelled to remodel if not alter her mode of proceeding.

In fact, the second day Daniel sat up, he was visited by Dora and her sister, after due preparations to guard him against sur-

prise, and as soon as he could walk down stairs, his young mistress was occasionally permitted to sit alone with him. Acting under careful instructions, Dora more than once appeared with a book in her hand ; and at last, with a sincere and simple good-nature which he could not now repel, asked him to learn a lesson with her : not one which was to be said to his mother or her father, but one which they could just repeat to each other. He consented ; and, during the period of his slow recovery of his former perfect health, went on, to his own great astonishment, better, as a student, than he had ever done in thrice the time at any other era of his life.

And still he might have gone on, gradually and humbly, to be sure, but a good way from his late ignorance, however, had not Mrs. D'Arcy again marred her own good work by not letting it alone. Daniel's brother, Marks, had been written to for his alliance in the series of "plans" undertaken by the good lady ; after many arrangements he had sent home a letter to Dan ; and this letter, upon a day deemed very favourable for the experiment, was entrusted to Dora for presentation to her now petted lover, without its having been thought necessary to tell her the secret it contained.

Her mild, loving, beautiful, though not intellectual eyes, widened and brightened with the pleasure of giving him pleasure, as she handed Daniel the epistle ; and at sight of his dear Marks's writing on the cover, his face also showed the joy of his heart. "Dora, Dora ! we must try to read it together !" cried Daniel. She eagerly assented ; but before they had completed their joint task, happiness had fled from their features, and the young pair interchanged glances of fear and affliction.

Marks informed his brother, that, in the course of about six months, he hoped to return to Ireland, and to his family, a gainer in worldly wealth, in knowledge, and in learning ; and, some short time previous to his coming home, he proposed to Daniel, with the consent, nay commands of his father and mother, that he should think of passing over to Spain, and, *after qualifying himself by literary attainments, as the writer had done*, take Marks' place in the mercantile situation which he, Marks, then held, and which had proved so advantageous to him. It was added, with cordial congratulations, to Daniel upon his having formed an engagement with an honourable and most amiable young gentlewoman, that six or seven years' absence from his native country, employed as was intimated, would obviously enable Daniel to sue for a happy termination of his love, with credit to himself and due respect to its object ;

and how short was the time of trial proposed ! and how young, and how capable of enjoying every youthful happiness, would Daniel then be ! only arrived, in fact, at the prime of fresh youth, itself—only about five-and-twenty.

The colour fled from Daniel's cheeks : and for a long pause he would not venture to look up at Dora, lest he might draw from the expression of her countenance proof of what he dreaded to learn, namely, that she, too, had given her assent to this blow against his hopes. She challenged his attention, however, by her smothered sobs, and as soon as he saw her undisguised grief, half his fears fled while he asked her, " Then, Dora, you knew nothing of this letter beforehand ? "

" Oh, no, no, Dan ! they never as much as told me of it, until a while ago ! and if they had, I never would have brought it to you," she answered.

" Thank God, thank God ! Dora ; for in that case, you will not be for banishing me, for seven long years from your side, and from Ireland ? "

" I do not wish it,—indeed I do not ! "

" And does that mean, Dora, that you love me still, and would have me, though I may never go to Spain to grow as rich and as learned as Marks ? "

" Don't ask me ! don't, Daniel !" and Dora hid her face in her hands.

" And why, Dora, dear ? " he grew suspicious of something, he knew not what.

" I can never tell you—never ! " she replied.

" They have got you into some plot against me, after all, Dora ! " he stood up, much agitated, some of his old ruggedness and gloominess of temper overshadowing him. The girl only wept. " And you keep their secret, Dora, you do ! " he resumed, his passion still rising : " but no matter ; you may if you like ; only if you do—listen to what I say, Dora. By the blessed light of this blessed summer day ! I will quit Ireland; not for their Spain, nor for their Spanish College, where the littlest outlandish boy of the whole class would laugh at the poor ignorant Irishman :—no, Dora ! but for some place where neither they nor you—you Dora—Dora, *ma-chorra-ma-chree !* —can ever find me!—where I can dig the earth, from morning till night, for the crust I eat—and then, Dora, wipe the dust and the sweat from my face, and kneel down to pray for you ; and then, lie on my straw to cry for you ! "

" Dan, dear ! Dan, dear ! " she rose up and followed him about the room, frightened at the strength of his passion ; " sit

down and quiet yourself, and don't tempt back the bad fever, and trust in me, and look pleased at me, and all I can say or do to comfort you, I *will* say and do."

"Will you promise to keep none of their mysteries from me, Dora?" he led her to a seat, and took another at her side.

"I will, I do; for, oh, Dan, they have only made me love you more and more, and pity you, too—pity you in the heart's-heart—as well as that; and besides, Dan, I break no word to any one else, for I gave no word, only listened to what they bid me, and then, till this day, did it as well as I could."

"Now I see, Dora, they wanted you to hate me, if I would not be a great scholar; that's it."

"No, Dan, not so bad; but they told *me*, over and over, to tell *you*, that my father would never let us be happy together, unless you took kindly to the books; and I was to bid you mind them, and to say I would love you better if you did, and to try and make you mind them; though, God knows how little I had the power, or, to tell the blessed truth, the heart, either, Dan; and, above all, they expected that I should not be as kind to *you*, if you refused, as if you did not."

"And then they bid you not to whisper me any of this, Dora?" interrupted Daniel.

"Yes, yes; but as I said before, I made no promise, and now, I hope, I am guilty of no sin but disobedience, dear Daniel; and indeed, indeed, I can't help that; it was a hard thing for them to want of me, when I saw you in your trials, and the cruel sickness and all—and now, not come back to half your strength, yet——"

"So, after all, Dora, you *can* care for me—(and you'll answer my question, at last)—you *can* care for me, without the earning, a'most as much and as well as with it?" again interrupted the selfish Daniel; "and you will *not* say you could like me better if I mind the weary ould books?"

"No, Daniel, I will not; if I did, it would be telling an untruth ~~in earnest~~: it wasn't for the books you made me like you first—and how can they ever make me love you better? Dan dear;" she looked cautiously towards the door; "I don't think so much of the book-learning as other people do:—maybe its' because I'm not bright, by nature, my own self; for we are all very wilful, and ever given to make little of what we can't or don't go to the trouble of having; but still, try as much as ever can, I think, in my own mind, that while one person is beholden to be a scholar, another's not; in particular, when ~~her~~ bodies than others' are wrong, and threaten to

punish us, if some of us endeavour to learn tasks, and when the want of very early schooling, by reason of their laws and statutes, leaves it very difficult for us to understand a book, or even the use of a book, in growing-up years—such of us I mean, as can't know a thing at a look, like a spirit, or a wonder of the world, as your brother Marks does, and my sister Helen does and, mind me, Dan, there's not many of that kind on the face of the earth ; and so—" she hesitated, a little, almost out of breath—" and so, Dan, dear, I, for one, am not wanting to send you off to Spain for seven long years, nor to cross or vex you, any more, in any one thing that might bring back your troubles and your sufferings."

" Dora, darling, the thanks of poor Daniel's heart to you for this comfort! But, one thing more, Dora. Do you believe your father is as fixed as he and they say he is, upon never listening to me unless I grow to be a great scholar ?"

" No Dan," again glancing round, and speaking in a whisper, " I believe no such thing. It's your good and kind mother that is at the bottom of all that, out of love and care of you. Not saying that for my sake, as well as for yours, my father would not like to see us both better read than we are ; but from many words of his, time after time, before we came here, I know he is of a mind that, in these bad days for people of our religion, as well as because he is not as rich as he has been, he'd as lieve see *one* of his daughters, at the least, united to a person well to do in the world, as to another who might have learning but want money or land ; so that, Daniel——"

" I see, Dora, and now I know how to be guided, and what to do ; and I was right, all along ; for I thought just the same of your father's mind as all you tell me ; and so, Dora, let us not despair, although I will never go to Spain for them, or make a fortune behind a counter like my brother Marks—not meaning by that a word of ill-nature to him, or a word to wrong the love between us—God forbid I should !"

And thus at the very moment when Daniel was really resuming his liking for literary acquirement, in consequence of the judicious working of *one* of his mother's plans, he was for ever weaned from his studious ambition, by the untimely interference of another of her plans. At Dora's side, undisturbed by superior criticism or remonstrance, he might have gained something in a few years : the prospect of a seven years' separation from her, in order to grow learned, made him hate learning altogether. In this sentiment he was far—~~far~~—by her (at least) ingenuous declarations of indifference—~~far~~—dally on the subject,

and confirmed by her interested statement of her father's real views respecting the kind of person he would tolerate as her partner for life. Poor Madam D'Arcy ! she selected a bad ally to present Marks's letter.

CHAPTER XI.

THE young lovers kept the real secret of this interview as close and as prudently as if they had been twice as old as they were. When Mrs. D'Arcy inquired of Daniel what he meant to do in answer to Marks' letter, he replied in the most manly style he had yet assumed towards his mother, though not disrespectfully ; "I intend *to* answer it, Madam." In vague misgivings, the sagacious lady applied to Dora for a confidential report of the conversation between her and Dan, upon the momentous subject : to her surprise, and as new material for her study of human nature, and adaptation of it to her purposes, she was met in a way that gave her no information, superseded continued catechising, and yet left her nothing to quarrel with or object to.

In much of the offended dignity which people advanced in years feel at being overmatched by juniors, whose most secret thoughts they would fain master, Mrs. D'Arcy sought a secret conference with her prime minister, Mr. Donovan; for, by this time, Hugh D'Arcy's situation, as nominal head of these his own family concerns, became as much a sinecure as that of the president of cabinet councils is understood to be. From this consultation resulted a determination to proceed more decisively than ever with the young people, for their common good; only it was farther resolved, that fewer words and more efficient acts should be the character of the policy agreed upon. Moreover, before the adoption of any very distinct measures, it seemed unavoidable to allow Daniel time to recover all his former health and strength, and so to temporize with him, as not to give cause for any impediment to his perfect convalescence. The latter-mentioned course was considered by his mother to be quite practicable. That he would never again dream of returning to his farm was, she concluded, evident, from the enjoyment he now took in Dora's conversations; that, until important steps could be ventured upon, he would also occasionally spend an improving hour at her side, while they read or wrote together, M^r. —— farther took as granted; and she certainly might c —— herself for regulating, directing,

and controlling the intercourse they must for some weeks be permitted to hold, so as not to suffer it to transgress a certain limit of indulgence and propriety.

Full of these schemes, she parted from Mr. Donovan to seek Daniel in another room. She was surprised to encounter him in the hall which she had to pass, evidently watching her appearance. When he stepped up to her, and briefly mentioned that it was time he should go look after his agricultural affairs, now that he was nearly as strong as ever, and the day so fine, Mrs. D'Arcy stared at him in a dilemma of vexation, and her gentle and well-balanced temper almost gave way under this repeated failure of her best and wisest schemes.

"And do you propose to stay at this farm of yours, sir?" she demanded.

"Every day—the day through—only I believe I'll ask you to let me sleep here the nights, mother," he answered.

"And when will you answer your brother's letter, Dan?"

"Some day this week, mother dear."

"And—I ask you over again, Daniel—how will you answer it?"

"Badly enough, I suppose, but as well as I can, mother: Marks won't expect fine words or a good hand from me."

There was no use in farther disputation. Mrs. D'Arcy saw that to Spain, or to a Spanish college, Daniel was determined never to go. It seemed also clear that he had once more given up "the weary ould books" altogether, so far, at least, as his present sudden change of mood could control the future. But, under the continued apprehensions about his health, the lady could not yet insist upon any thing to cross his whims: there was no resource then, but to allow him to say farewell in a peaceable manner, though, as he crossed her threshold with a free and light step, Mrs. D'Arcy's conscience a second time nearly unseated her equanimity, by some provoking suggestions, that if she had never minded getting Marks to write a certain letter, things might have gone on more promisingly than they now seemed about to do.

More punctual to his appointment than he had once before proved himself, Daniel returned for supper, and sat by Dora. And if any thing could make amends to his mother for his not doing exactly what she wanted of him, it was the unusual display of good-humour and high spirits which he exhibited on this occasion, while his whole manner seemed, meantime, improved into a gentleness and ~~co-~~ that called forth her secret admiration. Could she ~~ed~~ the real cause of ~~this~~ pleasing change. the son ~~old over again have~~

been distressed ; for, in fact, Daniel was playful and amiable, because his heart was lightened of a great load ; and Miss Dora had removed that load, by insidiously informing him, first, that she did not want him to be learned ; next, that her father only wanted him to be rich ; and the easy self-command displayed by Daniel arose from his certainty of acquiring wealth upon his farm—in other words, from his conscious power over the accomplishment of a well-understood purpose. Besides, his fury for displaying his personal prowess in the field had quite passed off, and he had come home to supper without having fatigued himself.

Thus many days and evenings passed on, Mrs. D'Arcy closely watching the proceedings of Daniel and Dora ; seldom allowing them private interviews, and when she did, always contriving to have some person, or some circumstance, to cause a seasonable interference. She also looked close, to see whether or not they would resume their studious pursuits ; but they did not. Once or twice, indeed, she observed them secrete a little book upon her sudden appearance ; but when she took measures to ascertain its contents, it turned out to be only Daniel's favourite "Seven Champions," or else "The Nine Worthies of the World."

But he regained his full health and strength, and at last came the day and the hour for winding up a long account with the unsuspecting Daniel.

He had taken leave of the little family supper circle for the night, and was going up to his bed-chamber. His mother followed him, and stopped him on the landing-place.

"Tell me, Daniel, have you answered Marks' letter yet ?"

"O yes, mother ; long ago."

"And what time have you named to him for meeting him in Spain ?"

"No time, mother—and sure I thought we were done with cross-questioning on that head."

"And you are really fixed upon not leaving Ireland ?"

"As fixed as Mount Leinster, mother dear : didn't you know that afore you asked me ?"

"Very well, Daniel. Good-night. But I am sorry on your own account. Very sorry for what must be the consequences to yourself of this obstinacy, blindness, and disobedience."

"I know, mother—the disobedience—yes—and—I ask your pardon—but I can't help it"—(Dora's words—she had well assisted him in his lesson)—"but, mother, what do you mean ? What is to happen ?"

"Time will tell, Daniel ; I will not. I have done with the subject. You have had enough of forewarning. Good-night."

She left him rapidly. He entered his room with disagreeable misgivings, which for some hours kept him waking. He arose in the morning, still very uneasy. It had lately been his habit to repair at an early hour to his grounds, not waiting for his breakfast at his mother's house ; but before he started, Dora and he used to meet for an instant, to bid each other good-morrow, at a certain stile, from which branched a path to his independent residence. Now he gained that stile, and did not see his mistress. He looked around. She was not in view. He re-entered the house, and asked after her. A servant answered, that, about an hour before, Mr. Donovan and the two young ladies had returned home, having been compelled thus suddenly to terminate their second visit to Mrs. D'Arcy, in consequence of a message brought by one of their own people at day-break."

"Was it bad news?"—Daniel inquired. His informant believed not—was sure not—only something very important. This threw him off his guard : and he plodded on to his farm, telling himself that he ought not to suspect any thing disagreeable.

But, all day, he did suspect, notwithstanding ; and some time before his usual hour for leaving his fields, Daniel was on the road, not to his father's house, but again to Mr. Donovan's. "He won't refuse me the inside of his door, and a bit of supper, any how," said Daniel.

He came in view of the old-fashioned mansion. The setting sun had made illuminations in every pane of its windows—"To welcome me," continued the self-flatterer. Approaching nearer, the effect disappeared : and then Daniel saw that—certainly not to welcome him—the inside shutters of the windows were closed. He ran up to the hall-door, and knocked. No one answered him ; not even a little dog barked. He knocked again, not louder, but fainter—for his hand failed him along with his heart : and at last the knocker fell from his grasp, and struck npon the iron knob beneath it one tame blow, of which his heart re-echoed the dull sound ; as the heart of him who stands at the brink of a friend's grave re-echoes that of the first clod which is flung upon the coffin.

He sat down on the steps, and rested his head between his hands. Presently an old woman came by a side approach to the house, towards a small door which led into the servants' apartments. He started up and ~~saw~~ to her. Much

alarmed, she stopped : he soon lessened the distance between them, and put the question he wished to propose. The old woman told him, that after returning from Mr. D'Arcy's, the family stayed but an hour in their own house, and then went away, accompanied by all their servants—she having been left to take care of the mansion.

Whither had they gone?—she did not know. On what sudden business?—she was still quite ignorant. When would they return?—"How could the likes of her tell?"—But would they, soon?—she believed not. And why did she believe not?—Because Jef (Geoffry), the footboy, had said as much in the kitchen, a moment before they all set out. Then, he had heard his master say so?—Very likely: though Jef often said a thing out of his own head,

Well:—other questions suggested themselves. Had it seemed as if the family had received bad news? No.—Then they all looked very happy, going away?—No, in troth! Why, then, they were all afflicted? No: nor that neither.—What, then? Only one of them—which? who?—one of the young ladies.—But, which of the young ladies? "How could the likes of her tell?" she scarce knew one from the other; more betoken, was a great way off from the carriage.

"The carriage!"—Daniel caught at a clew. Mr. Donovan could not keep a carriage no more than Hugh D'Arcy could, for legal reasons before given: if the conveyance alluded to by his old informant was not the public diligence from the town, it must have been borrowed of a Protestant neighbour:—a few more questions satisfied him on the point: it was a private carriage, well known to belong to Mr. Mossop, the relation of Mrs. D'Arcy, who had before got Daniel out of trouble.

A short time after, Mr. Mossop heard a furious knocking at his door; and his young cousin broke into the parlour. This gentleman had not been sufficiently enlisted in the confidence of Daniel's foes—(friends)—so that, bating his utter astonishment at the lad's appearance and manner, he had no hesitation in answering his questions as straight-forward as they were put. "Yes," he said, "it was in his carriage, certainly, and under the protection of his man, that Mr. Donovan had that day left home; and it was Daniel's own good mother who had come to ask the convenience of it for her friends—"

"Good mother!"—interrupted Daniel: "And how long ago is it since she came on that errand, sir?"

"Many days ago," Mr. Mossop said.

"And where has _____onovan gone in your carriage sir?"

The gentleman could not tell. Mrs. D'Arcy had not informed him, and he forgot, or did not think it worth while to ask.

"Thankee, sir!"—cried Dan, and broke out of Mr. Mossop's quiet house as unceremoniously as he had entered it, leaving that sedate, though spirited and intelligent gentleman to resume some magisterial studies of the evening, after he had muttered a few words of utter amazement, and finally smiled good-naturedly at the dawn of the thought of how matters really stood.

Little time again elapsed, until Daniel's mother, sitting in her parlour, opposite to her husband, also heard Daniel thundering at her door. Hurrying past Nancy, who opened it, prepared to scold him for being out so late, he entered the presence of his parents so abruptly, and presenting such a face, and such a general expression, that he caused Mrs. D'Arcy to utter a slight scream, ere she began—"Mercy of mercies, Daniel! what is the matter!"

"Nothing, mother; I'm sure *you* will say nothing; I only came to ask you a question: where have you sent the Donovans from me?" he spoke slowly, his passion choaked for a moment, and his voice very low—standing in the middle of the room.

"Where have *I* sent them, Dan!"

"Yes, yes, mother—where have *you* sent them—that's my question:—come, now, mother, come now: I don't stand here before you on a fool's errand: I *know* 'tis you that done it all; I *know* 'tis you that went to Mr. Mossop for the carriage; I *know* 'tis you that made Mr. Donovan take away Dora, because I wouldn't go to Spain for you, to learn the name of an old hat in Latin: so, come, I say, Madam Mother, and tell me the rest of the truth, at once."

"Rude boy! mean you to insinuate that I hesitate to tell the truth? that I ever did? ever could?" she arose in her full dignity, pale and trembling.

"Mother, I am not rude; or if I am, I do not mean it;" (he was right, he felt and showed but the rough energy of great passion,) "and I don't mean, either to say that your heart is not true—as true as the blessed sun:—yet, mother, you have not dealt openly with me; you kept your mind to yourselves, and plotted against me: you—"

"Silence, wretched creature, and leave the room!"

"No, mother!" now his voice mastered hers; "No! not till I go on—ay, and end! I tell you Madam Mother, you did plot against me—plotted with Marks, F...randee, to write me

that foolish letter—plotted with Dora's father, to tell me he would not listen to me till I went to school again—plotted with him to take her away from me ! ay, many days ago—these are Mr. Mossop's words—you planned to get the carriage many days ago, and she and I left ignorant of all!—left to grow and draw closer and closer to one another, that at last you might tear asunder the roots of our hearts, while ye tore us asunder as ye have done ! Now, answer me, mother—where have you sent her ?”

“ Quit my presence, sir !”

“ And that's your only answer, mother ?”

“ It is, sir—now, at least.”

“ Quit your presence ? Then I will. And your house, too—and you may wait in it, mother, till I come back. Good b'ye, mother—good mother, they call you—one has just called you so—but so I will not call you—Bad mother, I call you ! Cruel-hearted and unnatural mother ! Mother, that keeps no love for her child ! Mother, that does not care, this moment, for the wrack of *my* young heart ! Mother of a heart of stone !”

“ Hold your tongue, you scapegrace !” here interrupted Hugh D'Arcy, rising up from his wine-flask, as he just recovered the presence of mind and recollection of their relative situations, of which Daniel's startling appearance and overwhelming words and manner totally deprived him :—“ Hold your tongue, and quit your mother's presence, as she bids you —ay, and your father's too—or, by——”

“ Put down your stick, father !” in his turn interrupted Daniel, “ or do not, if you like :—Strike me to the ground with it ! here I open my arms and stand for your blow : and to you, father, I have nothing to say but this—I wish you had helped me to some of this book-learning they all want of me, instead of only teaching me how to like the wine-cup—and so, father, a good night to you, as well as to my mother, there—and may ye both find in the lucky son that's a-coming home to ye, enough, and more than enough, to make up for the son ye send out of your house this night—the clod ye shake from your feet ! the poor numskull—the dunderhead—that's not fit to sit at your grand table—that's not fit to be let live happy—as happy as one like him can live—that's not fit to live at all !”

He shot through the open parlour-door, and also through the hall-door, and out of hearing, ere his now alarmed and commiserating mother could muster breath to call him back.

CHAPTER XII.

AT Mrs. D'Arcy's entreaties, and, indeed, quickened by his own natural feelings, Hugh called a man-servant to his assistance, and went forth in pursuit of Daniel. It seemed certain that he had gone to the Red House ; but when they reached the place, no Daniel was there. They retraced their steps, deviating occasionally into by-paths to the right and to the left, which led to haunts of which Daniel was known to be fond, still ineffectually. They presented themselves before Mrs. D'Arcy, and reported their failure. The mother's fears rose high. Hastily putting on her attire for going abroad, she summoned another man, sent him off to the farm to watch for the lad's probable arrival there at a later hour ; despatched the first servant in a new direction, and taking her husband's arm, sallied out herself, trembling for the fate of her wayward son.

Hugh D'Arcy talked much, as, supported by his stick, he walked on with difficulty by his wife's side, over uneven ground, in a very dark summer's night. She did not utter a word ; did not even sigh or groan, although a terrible anguish possessed her. She thought of Daniel's last words,—“ Not fit to live at all !”—and also recollecting the temper in which he had uttered them, Mrs. D'Arcy's heart quailed within her.

“ What's the use, my dear, in stumbling and falling over these stones and rush-tufts, that we can't as much as see under our feet, 'tis so pitch-dark ? What would bring him here ? ” asked Hugh D'Arcy, as she hurried him forward across an unenclosed and uncultivated tract, of which, indeed, the surface answered his description.

Still she did not answer ; but she well knew where they were going. A few moments brought them within hearing of the sound of running water ; a few more elapsed, and, pressing her husband's arm closely, Mrs. D'Arcy stopped him upon the brow of a declivity, which fell into a glen, divided by a stream. It was a winding continuation of that in which Daniel and Dora had been discovered by Nancy upon a memorable evening ; but its features were more rude, more broken and banky, than those of the little haunt before sketched. The stream also took passingly, in this spot, a new character ; being formed at about the middle of as much of the valley as

was in view, into a pool of almost still water, many yards across, and of considerable depth. And upon this pool, now dimly visible from its reflecting the clouded heavens, and so remaining a shade less dark than the opaque grounds about it, did Mrs. D'Arcy's eye rest, as she caused her husband to stand still on the verge of the descent.

"Well, Madam D'Arcy?" questioned Hugh, while they still paused.

Again she made him no answer: but, muttering, an instant afterward, "Ay, it is smooth—quite smooth, *now*—but we'll see it closer—" began to stride down the declivity, her husband still involved in her speed, scarce able to keep himself from falling prostrate.

They were yet some distance from the pool, when Mrs. D'Arcy suddenly stopped a second time, freed her arm from that of Hugh, sprang backward, and clapped her hands together, as she screamed out, terrifically, in that wild and unfrequented place, "Yes, as I am a sinner! as I shall be called to answer it, there is the boy!"

She pointed, and her husband looking closer, saw a dark object slowly moving round, and dipping and rising again, at an indent of the pool, where the water tried to get vent over the stony barrier which curbed its course. "Man, man! why do stand here, like a statue?" she resumed, and hurried forward. Hugh D'Arcy, unable to follow her, unable, indeed, to stand, without firmly propping himself on his stick, soon saw her arrive within contact of the moving object: then she knelt among the rough and unequal rocks and stones that formed the natural dam of the stream, and stooped down to the water; and then the echoes of the little solitude were again called out by a second scream from the poor mother, but of a cadence so very different from the first, that it told Hugh D'Arcy she did *not* look upon the lifeless floating body of her son.

It was, in fact, a large mass of reeds and rushes, congregated in that spot, and by the monotonous motion of an eddy, matted and coiled together in a hard mass, which had so startled her. In the kneeling position in which she made this discovery, Mrs. D'Arcy still remained, her hands clasped, and her eyes turned up in prayer, when her attention was fearfully aroused by a new occurrence. Displaced stones rattled down the side of the valley opposite to that by which she had descended, and presently a figure, in rapid motion towards the self-same place she occupied appeared vaguely through the darkness of the night, and of the uncultured hill.

"Daniel, my son! Daniel!" she called out. The figure stopped. She repeated her cries. It stood motionless. In accents of misery and entreaty, that must have been accompanied by plenteous tears, she continued to address him; for Daniel indeed it was, come thither after indulging his rage and despair, until he doomed both to be insupportable. But, however efficacious, in one respect, her appeal might have proved, he did not answer it by approaching his mother. In the middle of her passionate speech, he only turned his back upon the pool of water, and upon her, and uttering some words, which, at the other side of the valley, sounded like the growl of a baffled bear, sprang up the pathless acclivity above him, and disappeared over its curving line. Another large stone, which his straining foot had unconsciously spurned from its loose embedment in the sandy soil, leaped and crashed down to the bottom of the glen, and bounding into the stilled water, over which his mother yet knelt, wetted her with the spray forced up by its angry plunge.

Savage, indeed, did Daniel's mood continue to be, although, after encountering his mother so unexpectedly, in that solitary spot,—sent there, like his guardian angel, to watch the waters he had called on to be his grave,—the impulse to self-destruction did not hold mastery in his breast. In truth, so confused and confounded had been, and still were, his powers of comprehension, that a superstitious doubt of the reality of her appearance glanced through his mind, and was not combatted or questioned,—or, after the succeeding moment, thought of. And before he came in sight of the pool, the screams he had uttered challenged his ear at a distance, but only added phrensy to the infatuation that was upon him; for, hoarsely crying out in answer to them, Daniel allowed himself vaguely to apprehend, that in those dread sounds, voices other than human ones, called him onward to brave what he was about to do.

He fled fast from the little valley, over cultivated fields and waste grounds, and gained the road to Dublin. It started into his mind that thither Mr. Donovan had gone with his daughters, and thither he turned his vain steps. Now fixed in a plan, however impracticable, his thoughts arranged themselves for it, and he thundered at the door of the first cabin he met, to ask if that morning Mr. Mossop's carriage had passed by. The information he received seemed to justify his first conjecture, and he continued his way.

In some hours, he was conscious of a swimming in his head and a faintness in his limbs, and, cursing his own weak frame, he

sank down at the road-side. After a short and almost oblivious rest, the trampling of horses aroused him. He looked abroad : it was daybreak, and two riders came towards him. Believing that he knew one of them, he started up, scrambled over the fence of the road, and again betook himself to the open country. A second time his strength and senses gave way, and a second time he shook himself from his lethargy, as he confusedly thought that a familiar figure appeared hastening towards him on foot, over some strange path, or adown some sloping ground, vaguely pictured to his vision and mind. As his perceptions grew darker and darker, and his strength less and less, dream-like apprehensions of the same kind floated through his brain, while still he tried to drag himself from one hiding-place to another ; and now and then he half fancied that his mother's form flitted before his eye, at a distance, her drapery bright, and glancing in the rays of the fully-risen morning sun. And however true or false such notions might have been, eventually he learned, indeed, that his mother had not forgotten him. In a last effort to hide himself, he fainted : and awoke to consciousness in a tamed and subdued temper, the taste of sweet wine on his lips, his cheeks wet with tears that he had not shed, and her arms around him. A man held two horses a few yards off, on one of which was a pillion.

To the words of love, of promise, of entreaty, breathed into his ear by the being, whom to love since his infancy, was as much an act of existence as to think or walk, Daniel, in the wane of his frantic fit, could not long remain insensible. The accents in which she spoke, too, touched his heart with pity, remorse, and self-accusation, for they were weak and exhausted as were his own, and told of many hours of misery and over-exertion. "We will write to Mr. Donovan, and ask him to come home to us, Daniel, my own boy," were some of the words of consolation spoken by the humbled as well as agonized Mrs. D'Arcy ; and if one little sigh over the downfall of her dearest and best laid projects accompanied the utterance of this sincere promise, let us excuse the foibles of human nature.

Daniel's father, looking wretchedly ill and shaken—his usually claret-stained cheeks chequered with ghastly spots of paleness, and his blue eyes enlarged and glassy—met Daniel and his cavalcade at the avenue gate, leaning upon a servant. At the first view of his son, the prematurely old man trembled violently, and tried to smile ; but bursting into tears like a child, he at length stammered out, in a kind of whispering scream,—"Welcome home, Dan—welcome, boy—oh, Dan !—oh, you

scapegrace!" and tottered to embrace him. This did not miss its due effect on Daniel's heart.

After a few days' repose, the utmost quietness, and the softest smiles and words reigning around him—even Nancy not seeming inclined to scold him, for, in fact, his late adventures and turn of character made her in awe of her young master, fully to the extent to which she pitied him—Daniel began to wonder that his mother said nothing farther about the letter to Mr. Donovan; and so also may any of Daniel's friends. In truth, extraordinary as it may seem, Mrs. D'Arcy, relieved from the all-conceding anguish in which, without one mental reservation, she had entered into the engagement in question, once more began to rally her own good opinion of her own genius for gaining a virtuous end, and even redeeming an honest pledge by sagacious management. Much as she had suffered by the experiment hitherto, to say nothing of Daniel's sufferings, in trying to limit his approach to any and every thing he wished, exclusively to an academic path; even still the lady believed that, partially at least, she might succeed in her darling object; and by means of this very letter she hoped to venture upon a first step.

"First of all," resolved Mrs. D'Arcy, "he shall pen it himself, *and that will improve him in writing*; and next, it shall contain matter—proposals coming from his own breast—by which he shall not be left quite as much behind, as he is at present, on the road to knowledge."

"Me? me, mother dear?" queried Daniel, as soon as she thought proper to hint her proposals;—"me write a letter on the most important thing that ever yet happened to me; and to such a man! me that never sent a line of penwriting, on any subject, to any body, in my whole life, afore!"

"That was only because he did not like to go to the trouble," Mrs. D'Arcy said, smiling kindly and flatteringly; "and if he had never tried before, how could he tell he should fail now? And, in fact, for his own happiness, he ought to oblige her: Mr. Donovan would expect an appeal under his own hand and seal—and Mr. Donovan would be right—for it was the only delicate, and proper, and respectful course: and, finally, if Daniel would only try to express his thoughts, in a rough copy, she would look over it, correct it, and then leave it to him to write out fair and unblemished."

By dint of repeating these arguments softly, and, indeed, with something of the sycophant in her heart, Mrs. D'Arcy absolutely succeeded in the end in making Daniel entertain a very loose conviction that, all this while, he had been hidin'

considerable talent, namely—that of even attempting to indite an epistle: and smiling to himself, and blushing as he made the promise, he finally consented to engage—quite alone, though, in his room—in his new task.

"And what am I to say in it, mother?" was his next question. And now were Mrs. D'Arcy's powers of diplomacy and passion for innocent contrivance taxed to the utmost.

"Why," she began, "he would say in it whatever he liked, of course,—that is, the wording of it would be of his own choice, entirely: as to the matter, both he and she already understood that, to a tittle:—in fact, what could be said, but to request Mr. Donovan to rescind his former condition, dooming Daniel to become thoroughly possessed of a college education? and as she, and Marks, and Daniel's father had given up the point, Mrs. D'Arcy ventured to promise her hearer that Dora's father would not prove quite unrelenting: and then, just to offer the old gentleman a kind of little bribe for his good resolves, surely Daniel might hint an inclination not to press his suit further for three or four years, at the least, although allowed free intercourse, meantime, with Miss Dora Donovan, and further permitted—invited, indeed,—to read, at her side, quite unobserved by any third person, whatever books she and he might like to read together, and perhaps make an extract from, occasionally—nay, to all this, Daniel was prepared, in the natural course of things, to pledge his word of honour as a gentleman—and," continued Mrs. D'Arcy, to her own mind—"little as they may gain by their private and uninterrupted studies out of the Seven Champions, or idle books of the kind, it will keep the boy's mind in the practice of going on, no matter how slowly, until Marks come home to speed him forward, at a good rate, by proper management, and by the dint of the pure brother's love between them."

Daniel's strong though uncultivated and wilful mind quickly stripped his mother's prosing of all the superfluity she imagined he could never detect upon it: he saw, in fact, exactly what he was wanted to do: but, every thing considered, he also felt little disinclination to act as he was bidden; and accordingly, locking himself up, he began his letter to Mr. Donovan: after half-a-day's labour, sent down to his mother a page of schoolboy's writing, sadly misspelt, yet explicitly containing all the propositions required: and after she corrected it, and after he made out a fair copy, it was despatched, and in a few days, Dora and he once more saw each other. The reader scarce requires to know that Mr. Donovan received, meantime, another letter from Mrs. D'Arcy herself.

CHAPTER XIII.

DANIEL was told, and he believed, that his re-meeting with Dora was unfettered by any of the more considerable of the former restrictions imposed upon their intercourse ; yet he remained uneasy on the subject. He also took an opportunity of asking her, in confidence, whether or no she had been tutored to play any such part towards him as, in a previous confession, she admitted she had : and Dora answered, frankly and promptly, No : and yet again he could not feel quite contented. "She is not as kind to me as she used to be," he said ; and thereupon he pressed her still closer, by conjecturing that, in this respect, at least, she might have undergone a lecture : just such a one as a father or a friend might mean, in good part towards himself, to teach her some improvement of manner, "or a thing of the kind;"—but Dora's denials continued to be all he could wish, although his own restless misgivings were not so.

Marks had been expected home before this, at two different times, little distant from each other ; upon one occasion, his mother believed he had reached England, if not his native land, itself ; but such calculations proved unsound, in some way that Daniel, owing to his own occupations and feelings, only imperfectly comprehended. A third time, in consequence of a letter received from him, Mrs. D'Arcy announced the speedy arrival of her elder son ; and out of this circumstance Daniel extracted fresh, and—(he felt it himself to be)—wicked perturbation of spirit.

"Now, you *omadhaanī**, you *budgee*,"† said Hugh D'Arcy, coming up with the intelligence to him and Dora, as they walked out of doors together, and, notwithstanding his literal terms of abuse, speaking in great good-humour—"now, mind your eye : here is Marks, the wonder o' the world, coming home to take her from you, at last ;—yes, Dora, pet : a fine, slashing, comely, straight-nosed fellow of my own inches, not like that stumpy Dutchman by the side o' you."

Both laughed at the intended jest ; and Daniel expressed great delight at the prospect of shaking Marks by the hand,—

* Simpleton.

† A short, thick-built fellow.

but he never felt less in his life, before : and though Dora mumbled something to assure him he need fear no rival, yet he saw her blush deeply, and believed for an instant that she looked very deceitful, and very like a flirt—and a jilt.

" Ay, laugh away," continued Hugh—" but they may laugh that win :—to say nothing of his being a bright fellow, Dora," suddenly taking up his former speech ; " and a raal hand at every kind of book and larning under the sun :—whisper, *ma-bouchal*," putting his lips to Dan's ear, " work hard, for the little time you have left, at your own books at home here, or, by the Piper of Jiffytown ! she may slip through your fingers, after all that's come and gone :"—and Hugh walked off.

Whether, as had been Dan's omen, this badinage of his father —indiscreet under any circumstances—was an untimely and partial escape of some new " plot" hatching against him, or merely the utterance of an idle whim come, that moment, into Hugh's own grotesque head, Daniel had not temper enough to consider. The first conjecture suited him best, and he picked it up and took great care of it, without debate or examination; and now he caught himself wishing Marks settled in Spain for the next five years, at the least, and hated his own heart in the same breath for thinking so.

" Is your brother like the description we have heard, in good earnest, Dan ?" questioned Dora, after a long silence, during which they walked forward arm-in-arm. His evil fit came back with increased sharpness, and giving her a hasty, disjointed answer, and pleading a recollection of some important business he had to attend to, he left Dora to finish her promenade alone.

From that day forth, he imagined he saw a still more remarkable change in her manner towards him ; and for more than a week afterwards, only imagined it. Then, however, there certainly appeared of a sudden a real something about her, for the power of perceiving which, even Daniel need not have called on the resources of a lover's proverbial capacity of drawing palpable proofs out of nothing at all. Dora Donovan became, in fact, abstracted, silent, sad—more than sad—and mysterious, and once or twice he found her weeping.

His inquiries as to the cause of her care and affliction were first affectionate ; for, strange to say, now that he had true grounds for jealousy he would not be jealous : finally, when she denied his charges, and denied them with a bad grace, or when she clumsily endeavoured to change the conversation, he grew,

as was now his privilege, vehement. The young lady kept her secret, however, and Daniel dreamed of hideous things. While he is still uninformed, others shall judge between him and his young mistress.

After Hugh D'Arcy's ill-conceived levity upon the subject of Marks's return, Dan took little pains to conceal from Dora the bad humour in which he chose to consider himself. His manner and conduct resented, too, the changes he imagined he saw in hers. The young pair were therefore oftener separated than they used to have been. In a sullen freak Daniel would leave her alone, as he has been seen to do in consequence of her inquiry concerning the truth of Hugh's flattering portrait of his elder brother. Thus abandoned to her own resources for entertaining herself,—(Helen laughingly rejected the society of "the moping lovers," and employing herself within doors), Dora often wandered some distance from the house, drooping and melancholy, and vainly trying to account for Daniel's ungracious demeanour. Quite unsuspecting on her own account, she at last began, without knowing it, to fall into his very mood:—"Surely," she would say, "he cannot have tired of me, or seen some one else he loves better."

Such half-formed thoughts were in her mind, as she walked through the more open path of the adjacent wood, upon an evening when her tyrannical admirer had treated her with unusual capriciousness. It was twilight abroad under the open sky, and much darker of course beneath her present leafy roof; but the abstraction of her thoughts, as well as her simpleness of heart, kept off any positive apprehensions of danger in so lonely a situation. Dora, moreover, though, as she has herself confessed, "not bright by nature," nor, in the ordinary round of life, remarkable for making an impression in any powerful way, had yet within her a certain soundness of judgment, and a strength of character, which placed her above the ordinary nervousness of young persons of her sex; and it may be added, which only required sufficient cause to show itself, to the surprise, perhaps, of those who knew her well, or who at least were certain they did.

But, upon the occasion mentioned, she had, notwithstanding, suffered her mind to be possessed by one of the most unnerving sentiments which she could have encouraged—namely, doubt and fear of the sincerity of the person she dearly loved. And it was while she almost fully yielded herself up to the fancy, that something occurred calculated to confirm it in the strongest shape.

Walking slowly along the wood-path, she could see indistinctly, some distance before her, to a point where another path crossed it, or rather took it up at an angle. A half-moon began to triumph with its immaured light over the glories of the departed day, and stealing downward through openings in the umbrageous canopy above her, weakly flickered upon the stems of the trees which stood at the juncture of the two paths. The effect pleased her eye, almost without the assent of her mind, and she watched it, as still she very slowly advanced. There seemed to her to be two stems, in particular, at the point mentioned, which were selected, as might be said, for the pale dancing rays to play their vagaries upon ; one, that of an old beech, bald and smooth, and streaked with broad dashes of white, directly across its bark ; another, of a more sombre cast, yet grayish in its tint, and unchequered by a single contrast of colour ; and both were so close as almost to touch each other. While Dora's regards continued fixed on these objects, she thought the latter moved, quickly revolving, without changing its place, so as to show a different side from that she had been gazing upon. She stopped, suddenly : her catching breath and shrinking figure now proclaimed her filled, at the instant, with all, and more than all, of the nervousness generally experienced by frightened women.

But after a moment of chilling doubt, she told herself that she had but imagined this curious circumstance ; that the imperfect light, its motion on the object, caused by the waving of the boughs through which it glimmered downward, the distance, and the vague state of her own mind, had deceived her. Still, however, she fixed her eye. The supposed tree seemed indeed too well rooted in its forest-bed to turn round about, confronting her, as she feared it had done : and Dora prepared to face her own fair forehead homeward, when she heard these words,—“ Do not go back till you hear what a friend has to say to you.”

“ Dan ?” she asked, in great fear.

“ No ;” and now she could not doubt that it was her equivocal stem which spoke, for it left its place, and became to her comprehension, what it had always been in reality—a tall man, wrapped from head to foot in a gray riding-cloak, of a fashion then adopted only by people of consideration.

Unable to scream, she fled along the path she had come. The man did not at first appear to follow, for she heard him break through the brushwood at his right hand. She had not raced far, however, when small branches crackled, and leav-

were rudely rustled behind her, though still at one side of the open path ; and then the same noises came closer—passed her in the near depths of the wood, no person to be seen—grew fainter, as they advanced forward, and, whether from getting out of hearing, or from the stranger's pausing, became inaudible to Dora's ear.

She paused too. The apprehension that her unknown "friend," as he called himself, was stationed at some point of the curving path, in advance, to intercept her, seized upon Dora. And would she turn back or plunge among the trees and underwood, at her left hand to avoid him ? No : she was unacquainted with the mazes of the wood, or with any path but that upon which she stood—and to fly, in either direction, would be but to induce his pursuit, and doubtless, expose herself to a rencounter with him at greater disadvantages than those she at present experienced. Dora thought of crying out, and screaming to the utmost strength of her voice : but a fear that Daniel would be the nearest person to overhear her, and that his violent temper would produce a deadly strife between him and the stranger, checked her vehement impulse. Her best course, then, was, to continue her homeward way slowly and cautiously, prepared to confront this intruder, whoever he might be, or take her chance for evading and passing him, should he again interrupt her.

And again he did cross her path. Turning an abrupt curve of the open walk, she saw him, nearer than before, standing still near the stems of some trees, but now detached from them all, and obscured in unbroken shadow.

"Man!" cried Dora, as she a second time stopped short, "do you mean to offend or harm me?"

"No," he replied, mildly and solemnly, without moving.

"What then?"

"I have said it before—to warn you."

"Warn me! against what?"

"Danger ;—danger, that is round about you, as thick as the branches and the leaves this moment. Danger meant to you, and made for you."

"If this is true," said Dora, "it is a friend, indeed, that speaks."

"A friend, indeed, and so I said, at first—a friend that would no more think of offending you, by word or deed, in this lone place to-night—as you feared—than he would think of it, if you were guarded by a thousand soldiers, in the main street of the town, below."

"I am willing to believe you ; to—but approach no nearer!" as the stranger stepped loftily towards her ; "stay where you are, or I will scream till they come out to me, from the house, or—until you kill me!"—

"I *will* stay where I am, for now I am near enough to speak the words I have to say, in the whisper they ought to be spoken and heard by—and I meant to come no nearer. Have no fears of me, I bid you, over again, Dora—Dora Donovan—the most wronged, and the least deserving to be wronged, of all earthly creatures. Kill you! I would as soon harm a single hair on your beautiful head, as I would stab the priest in his vestments on the steps of the altar. Now listen to me, well. I come here from afar off—from where some people think I am, while we are speaking, or else nigh hand to it. I come here, Dora, to tell you what I know, and what will save you, if you are only said and led by it—and in that follow your own mind—no one alive will meddle with you and it, as soon as you see your way before you. But I must take my own part, by one short word, first of all. Putting you on your guard exposes *me*, also, to great danger. If certain men and women knew—if they ever know of how I am going to be a friend to you, it would be my ruin. For that reason, it behooves me beforehand to make sure that they never can. Do you swear that you never *will* tell them, and I *am* sure. And this, at the least, you won't refuse : one good turn deserves another."

Dora hesitated ; but it was only to consent to error. Her pure heart, and her clear judgment told her, in the first instance, that she ought not to bind herself in eternal confidence, away from the knowledge of her best friends, with a stranger. But his imposing announcement of great danger to her, doubt, suspense, curiosity, want of time for mature thought, together with his plausible professions of esteem and interest, his gentle voice and manner, and his delicate and respectful conduct, all threw her off her guard, and she gave a promise to swear to the secrecy this person required.

He resumed.—"I thank you, Dora Donovan, for consenting to do what will save *me* from danger, while *I* run such risks to save *you*."

As he spoke, this argument occurred for the first time to her, and she was confirmed in her resolution.

"I can see, by the light of the young moon about you, that you wear a cross on your breast : take that in your hand, kiss it, and call it to witness that you will never, while you breathe

the breath of life, tell to a living soul the words that are to pass between us—or as much as that we have even met or spoken."

"She rapidly complied; and her solemn oath was made before she even thought of putting the so necessary question of—"But, first, who am I talking with? Tell me your name?"

"That I can never do, Dora Donovan—at least not till we are better friends, if the like should happen in the course of time—and now, you know, it is too late to ask, in regard of any good the knowledge could do you."

Her understanding assented to the justice, or to rather the truth, of the last remark, although her heart felt no additional confidence in him who so quickly and adroitly seemed merely to take advantage of the position to which he had reduced her. This cleverness was scarcely of a piece with the candour of his speech and bearing, hitherto. And, some indistinct doubts stirring within her, she suddenly preferred a new request.

"Then let me see your face. Drop your cloak where you are, and I can see it plain enough."

"And why do you want to see my face?"

"That I may know you again," she answered, frankly, in a tone which spoke her fear of a possible necessity for the precaution she fain would take, growing out of fresh misgivings with respect to the honour or fair dealing of her new acquaintance.

"And what good would it be to you to know me, again, Dora?" he asked, disguising any consciousness of her meaning, if indeed he had apprehended it.

"'Tis very natural to wish to see a friend, a second time," equivocated Dora.

"If ever we do meet, a second time, I do not want to be called to your mind by our meeting at present, Dora Donovan."

"Indeed!—and why?"

"Because it is not to put in for your friendship, or your thanks, or any thing of the kind, in the future, that I come here to-night. That would be a reward for doing you a service, and I am above the notion; or, I can say it better, if I say, that the thought of serving you will be reward enough, and more than enough, for me."

This plausible profession of disinterestedness, by soothing Dora's good opinion of herself, again threw her off her guard: she mistook, as many have often done, very insidious flattery for high-mindedness; her confidence in her mysterious friend

fully returned, and she gave up the second-best wise resolve she could have made, after swearing her oath, and which had gradually been forming in her breast during their last words—namely, to stop where she was, and to accept no farther secret from him which her sacred pledge must compel her to bear about her to the grave, as she was already bound to conceal the fact of their having met, and, so far, spoken together.

"Besides," continued the stranger, in a low, impressive tone, that had its effect upon Dora—"supposing, in truth, that we are doomed even to see each other, for that second time, it must be among people before whose faces you would sink into the ground at the thought of seeing me."

"What!" cried Dora—"my present friends?"

"Your present friends."

"All of them?"

"All of them."

"Go on, then!" she continued, now aroused into a fearful interest—"your warning!"

"And it is to guard you against the pangs you would surely suffer by so meeting and knowing me, that I now hide my face and my name: I will tell you more, Dora Donovan; I am doing my best, while I speak to you, to hide my voice, for the same reason, ay, and to change my way of putting words together, so that not even by a sound of my breath, can you believe me the same person you now have before you, in this moonlight wood, when the time comes for knowing me as *one of the very 'present friends,' you talked of.*"

"Gracious heavens! and friends *with them?*"

"Ay, for it must be so—in the show of the thing, at the least, Dora."

"Do not keep me any longer on the rack, then!—say what you have to say, at once!—hush—hush!—stop!"

Her last words were whispered, as a light foot-fall sounded on the path behind her, and Dora turning saw the figure of a woman, or of a girl, of the lower, or of the middle rank of those around her, now standing still, and obviously watching her and her companion. But the new-comer, finding herself observed, in her turn, quickly walked down the path and was lost to view.

Almost at the same moment, Daniel D'Arcy's voice sounded in nearly the direction she had gone, pronouncing Dora's name loudly and in alarm.

"This is very unlucky," muttered the stranger, speaking rapidly—"you *must* answer him, and go home with him. I

know as much, and know it well, and so for this night, I can tell you no more—but will you meet me, for your own sake, the night after the next—’twill be less suspicious than to-morrow night—and then hear, in a few short words, what you ought to know better than you know the right hand of your body ?”

Dora in great confusion of mind, assented.

“ And here—on this very ground, at the time when the young moon will be glimmering on the same spot ?”

Again she gave a hasty promise.

“ Good-b’ye, then, and the good night’s rest, and remember your oath !”

He quickly hid himself in the wood ; and it was strange to herself, that, at the moment, Dora should have noticed how different from his staid serenity and even dignity of action, hitherto, was the expression of his scrambling speed as he now withdrew to escape the notice of Daniel D’Arcy ; the one seemed appertaining to a gentle folk, the other to a mean person ; and yet she could not tell why she thought so ; nor had she time to reduce her imperfect idea to an impression, when Daniel’s rapid feet sounded on the dry walk behind her, and she turned to meet him.

It has been said, that before Dora strayed into the wood, this evening, he had quarrelled with her for something or nothing : now, however, his dudgeon seemed wholly gone, or at least sunk in his anxiety about her safety, on account of her unseasonable and long absence from the house. When they met, he was very importunate to learn why she had staid abroad so late, and Dora more than convinced him by allusions to his bad behaviour in the early part of the evening ; so that for the present they walked to supper seemingly better friends than they had lately been.

CHAPTER XIV.

"**T**H EY walked to supper, *seemingly* better friends than they had been." Daniel was really more confidentially inclined towards Dora than she was to him. A horror of how her recent adventure in the wood might affect her position with her lover, began to fall upon her mind. The stranger had threatened to show that danger was meant to her by "*All her friends!*" For the first time she pondered distinctly upon that extraordinary announcement : and that it might include the individual at her side was fearful to think.

Then, who *was* her unknown monitor ? Again, more than one of his disguised hints on this point came with a possible meaning before Dora's imagination, and Daniel felt her shudder at their conjectured import. In answer to his questions, she said it was with cold. They gained his father's house, and complaining of indisposition, she went up to her bed-chamber, and locked herself in without light, save that scantily afforded by the half-moon through her casement.

Here, modified by the gloom around her, by the ghost-like gleamings of that feeble light, by her low state of nerve, and, be it added, by a shadow of childish, crouching superstition, not yet dispelled from Dora's judgment, her notion of the whole matter gradually began to change from a terror of reality, into a yet more appalling one. Toning with her new mood, the wood-scene assumed a dreamy supernatural character. The beech-stems, played over by the first winkings of the feeble moon, lost their distinctness of outline, when recurred to in something of the feeling of arresting their images as vouchers of a true occurrence ; their masses of foliage came back without shape, or colour, to her memory : the time she had been in converse with the stranger was undefinable by her mind ; and he, himself, standing almost motionless in his cloak of gray, a being unknown to her, unnamed to her, unfeatured, unidentified, yet holding closest intercourse with her heart, and thoughts—he, the chief actor of the scene, grew, by degrees, so shadowed over to the medium-clouded vision of fancy, that Dora could finally have described him as an unearthly visitant. His very voice resounded in a stilled, stifled way, along the chords of

recollection, until she invested it with a spirit's cadence.—What vague, yet most deeply-working and wonderful whims or snatches of something or other, not merely in Dora's situation, but in almost every situation, may not a silent moon-lit chamber, aiding an agitated recurrence to an exciting event, produce in many of us at almost every period of life!—And Dora, it will be remembered, was not seventeen.

Disturbing as were such fantasies, and felt by her to be, if possible, more so than her first prepossession, as she had approached the house, yet Dora cherished them in preference to those first ones : and her argument for the seeming inconsistency was, “ If it be an evil thing, sent, or come to cross my path, it can destroy only me—if I have spoken with *him* whom I dread to think of, as so speaking, it will be ruin to us all.”

Suffering from the alternate recurrence of both her theories, and nearly equally under the influence of each, she at last unlocked her door, to allow her sister Helen free ingress whenever she might choose to visit her chamber for the night, and then retired to bed. Helen coming up to enquire about her assumed indisposition, very soon afterward found her, as she thought, asleep, and stole down-stairs again ; but Dora only feigned repose to escape questioning : she could not so soon forget. Nor did her eyes close that night, until she formed a strong resolution, which almost the earliest light of the next morning saw her begin to carry into effect.

In the main street of the neighbouring town stood the market-house ; a quaint old building, like many so named, at present to be seen in England and Ireland ; being composed of open arches, at every side, propping a suit of public rooms, surmounted by a wooden cupola, in which was the infallible town-clock, and enclosing a flagged area, where, upon rainy market-days, articles that might suffer from wet could be exposed for sale ; and where, in all weathers, and, indeed, upon all days in the year, certain other commodities were allowed to tempt the passing eye of a customer.

Of the petty merchants or traders presiding over such establishments as have last been mentioned, some sold, arrayed upon a deal table, thread, needles, garters, tapes, mock-jewellery, shoe-buckles, black-ball, thimbles, and such like useful things ; some sold fruit and gingerbread ; some, drams of good old brandy, which, in those good old times, the most respectable seniors of the town—for example, the mayor, and his brother aldermen, the doctor, and even Sir John Roche, from the very top of the aristocratic street, did not think it any sin

or shame to stop and taste, as they passed by, if the morning happened to be too cold, or too hot, or too damp, or too dry from a cutting east-wind ;—and some others of these humble dealers vended bread and cheese, or, squatted on the flags beside their baskets, (and it will be surmised that these were women,) oat-meal and groats for stir-about, or for griddle-cake ; or cakes in reality, made from new barley ; or old pease boiled soft and black, and kept hot and hot, for immediate consumption —a great rarity ; and the last of the motley and picturesquely-grouped traffickers under the market-house, whom we shall notice, was a little and very old man, who dealt in the buying and selling books and pamphlets, generally as worn and as obsolete as himself.

He cannot, here, be given a name, for no one knew his name ; but he suffered his snow-white beard to grow down to his breast, and, therefore, for lack of a better appellation, was called Beardy—Old Beardy, whenever he was spoken of, and Master Beardy whenever he was spoken to. And this latter fact will indicate the estimation in which he was held. In truth, notwithstanding the provocation to jeer and merriment, contained in his long beard, at a time when no one who could afford a halfpenny at the barber's shop, went with one of more than a week's growth, the old man inspired a commiserating kind of respect, and was treated accordingly. His physiognomy, his manners, his persevering industry, the character of his trade, and even his outlandish dress, all conspired to win him good opinion. His eyes were large, black, brilliant, and benevolent—perhaps dulled, notwithstanding, by approaching dotage—for again, be it remarked, he was very, very old. Modest, humble, silent, unobtrusive, he spoke willingly and winningly, and in a certain strain of ease, if not of dignity, with whoever vouchsafed to engage him in conversation—a degree of reserve ever keeping him, however, from loquacity.—Upon occasions, when he suspected that stolen books were offered him for sale, by vagrant schoolboys or runaway servants, the honesty of his proceedings commanded universal praise ; and then, while the wares he sold were on all hands allowed to be as much above those of his competitors as mind is above body, the universal opinion also existed, that he knew every word contained in every book on his “standing ;” could make all those books himself, if needful, or talk them all, from title-page to FINIS, letter after letter.

Added to this, the mystery of who and what he was, where he came from, nay, to what tribe or country he belonged,

worked strongly in support of the general interest he created : and another mystery of a single little room which he rented in an obscure alley off the main street, did not fail in its effect. Day after day, summer and winter, while he pursued his calling under the market-house, this room remained open for all curious observers, and contained visibly nothing but a bundle of straw for a bed, a cricket-stool for a seat, a little tin saucepan to cook his meals, and a few sods of turf to be lighted when he should come home for the evening ; but when he did come home, the door was well-locked and barred, no one saw him, until the following morning, at his business, only that many listeners used to hear him puffing at his fire, "to keep the life in it," almost the whole night long ; and, "what could that be for ?" (though the inquirers had already answered their own question,) "or what could he be doing alone in that room, at all ?"

One single matter would now and then create a slightly unfavourable remark. The little old man had never been seen at church ; and such an omission, in such times, could not fail to produce observation. But he had never been seen at the mass-house either ; and so, just as much in character with the times, his sin was forgiven : for he might be a Turk or Jew, or a member of any other harmless sect, and therefore worthy of brotherly toleration.—Will the fact be believed, that there were times in which the following rare triplet, or one very like it, was placarded over the gates of an ultra-royal town in Ireland ?—

“ Turk, Jew, or Atheist,
May enter here—
But not a Papist.”

At all events, our quotation will now be read by every possible patron of our story, with the same innoxious smile in which, purely as a curiosity, it is given.

A short time after he had appeared under the market-house this morning, Dora Donovan stood by old Beardy's stall. Nancy attended at her back. When the fair young girl first came up, and caught the old man's eye, she bowed her head reverently to her breast, and even inclined her person with an air of profound respect ; and he, in return, bestowed on her a recognition which told they had previously met. But it was remarkable, that before either of these greetings took place, both looked round the market-house cautiously, as if to note whether they were observed or no.

Dora was then drawing near to old Beardy, when a girl, dressed in a gaudy excess of the mode of the day, skipped up to the stall, humming a gay tune, and pertly asked the book-merchant if he had for sale "The Nightingale of Love," a song book of a questionable character, known to a limited number of the admirers of rhyme and melody of that time. Immediately upon her approach, Dora stepped farther back from her old acquaintance, and began turning over the leaves of a large volume near her; and Nancy, who, at a glance, recognised Jinny Haggarty,—now metamorphosed, under the fosterage of Mrs. and Mr. 'Torney Dooly, into a smart town belle—elevated her chin, and agitated her nostrils, as if a gust of very bad odour had come between her and the pure air, and with an unspellable ejaculation of anger and contempt, turned on her heel, and paced, in much dignity, some distance away from "the standing."

"What, Mistress Nancy!" cried Jinny, after a glance of quick indignation had changed into a saucy sneer, "and are you going for to give up an ould friend that-away?"

"Ould friend!" echoed Nancy; "when did that happen, I wondher, Madam Flirt? Spake to your aquals, an' your likes, Jinny Haggerty, an' never mind me."

Now, this high tone chiefly resulted, no doubt, from Nancy's perfect notions of female excellence of character (an attribute that had scarcely attached itself to Jinny from her first 'teen, and that she was suspected of caring less and less about since her domestication under 'Torney Dooly's roof),—yet, if Nancy's heart had been dissected by an axiom or a maxim-maker, perhaps a little of her present rage for virtue might have been found to be inspired by her envy of Jinny's fine clothes.

The attorney's maid of all work was not slow in putting in a rejoinder to Nancy's retort, so that they both began to scold immediately in loud accents, to the amusement of many of the merchants of the market-house, and of passers-by, who formed a crowd round the spot. At this, old Beardy interfered, with a view to part the combatants.

"Young woman," he said, addressing Jinny, "I entreat you to leave my stall, that I may pursue my calling in peace; especially as I have not for sale the book you asked of me."

"Haven't you?" demanded Jinny, turning her anger towards him—"I say you have, ould Beardy, if you'd like to look for it!"

"Of a surety, no, damsel," he resumed: "nor can it be

among my stock without my knowledge ; forasmuch as I would not account myself permitted by a good conscience to buy or sell light and defiling pages, such as its title proclaims it to be."

"Defiling fiddle-me-dickery!" scoffed Jinny ; "and what a rout you make about your conscience, you ould pretendher, that, asther all your talk, is never seen at church, mass, or meeting, and knows no more of that matter, in any one way, than—"

"Be silent, wench," interrupted Dora, as at these words she raised her fine eyes from the volume she had seemed to be engaged with, and fixed them solemnly and reprehensively on Jinny.

"*Helatchee!*" again sneered the bold girl, using an ejaculation she had lately learned of Mrs. Dooly. "Be silent, says she!" mimicking Dora ; "an' who's for talking so grand, I wondher?—Och, ay, sure, now that we can look at you close—I seen you afore, of a sartainty—ay, Madam Dora Donovan," suddenly coming to the young lady's side and whispering,—"Ay, and upon a time, that's not yet forgot between us, to say nothing o' the compliments we're givin' an' takin' this mornin'!" and so saying, Jinny pushed and shouldered through the crowd, and went flaunting and jerking away.

Old Beardy had contrived to be standing near to Dora's other side at this moment, and now he also whispered in her ear :—"Retire, my child, without a present word—there are too many eyes dwelling on us ; but you may seek me in my private abode this evening, at eight of the clock,"—taking from her hand the book she had appeared to have been engaged with, he added aloud, "Credit me, young gentlewoman, it is the very best imprint of so rare and curious a work ; yet, if you cannot so satisfy your mind, I nothing urge you to the purchase of it—wherefore, good morning unto you and your follower." With a distant bow, he seemed to decline farther conversation between him and Dora ; and our fair young friend, acting upon the advice conveyed in his more confidential speech, beckoned to Nancy, and retraced her steps to Hugh D'Arcy's house.

But at eight of the clock the same evening, Dora, still attended by Nancy, and kept in view by another protector of the male sex, one of her father's servants, again visited the town. Passing the market-house, closely muffled in a cloak, she gained the arched entrance of a narrow and mean alley, or,

according to local phraseology, lane ; and after looking cautiously up and down the street, turned quickly into it, Nancy following. They walked in silence between two rows of poor small houses, fronted with wood, or in some instances with clay, and at length entered one, of which the door stood wide open, while its interior, passage and staircase, was nearly pitch dark, the last glimmers of the summer evening scarce being able to penetrate into it through the obstructions of the crowded lane abroad.

The stairs yielded and creaked under the feet of Dora and Nancy, as they slowly ascended, using the utmost caution to avoid a false step. The latter was beginning to whisper something, when the young lady turned round, touched her arm, and in a whisper still more subdued, bid her be silent as the grave, lest some wretched people who inhabited the room on the ground-floor should have their attention unnecessarily aroused. Nancy obeyed ; but they had not quite ascended the stairs, when she commenced an agonized scream, which her rallied self-command could scarce keep from ringing through the crazy abode.

"And what ails the girl, now ?" asked Dora.

"A crature that's afther driving plump agin the legs o' me, Miss!" answered Nancy ; "an ould rat, as big as a year-ould calf, I'll take my 'davey !"

"Hush !" still whispered Dora ; "we have gained the landing-place, and you know you must sit and watch here, while I remain within."

"Musha, don't bid us this time, darlin' Miss Dora, if you don't want to have me carried, body and bones, down stairs, wid 'em, or et into a 'notomy ;—sure, I can trot through the lane a broad, over an' hither, till its my own hour to step in."

"Nancy, you must keep watch where you are, or I shall go home again without doing what brought me here."

"Oh murther ! an' sure that 'ud be a hainous sin in me to make you do. Well, *a-lanna*, we'll see ; maybe Jef 'ud folly us into this place, an' then I might keep my heart up."

"Manage as you will, but do not deceive me, Nancy ; if detection happens, you know, as well as I do, that life is at stake."

Having thus spoken, Dora stepped softly across the dark landing-place, and knocked gently at a small door. She was unanswered. She knocked again, giving four distinct taps with the bent knuckle of one of her fingers, still no one moved

or replied within. "The two taps, now, darlin'," whispered Nancy; and Dora obeyed her directions, and at last she attracted notice.

"That is my child Dora, by her signal," said a shaking voice, so immediately inside the door that the speaker must have held his face close to it, at his own side, although previously he was so reserved.

"Dora," answered the girl, in a tone of the utmost deference, and almost of affection, at the same time.

"Welcome, then," resumed the voice. The door half opened without sound, allowing the light of a lamp to stream out upon the landing-place. Dora, saying to Nancy, "Remember," glided in, and was received, after he had again, as he believed, secured the door (though, in fact, he left it open), by old Beardy, now dressed differently from the quaint costume he always wore in the market-house. A brown stuff cassock, girded round his loins by a leathern belt, flowed to his toes, and on his head was a skull-cap of the same colour and material.

"Your blessing, father," resumed Dora, kneeling meekly, as she bowed her head and crossed her hands on her beautifully formed bosom.

"God's blessing, and my blessing, be on your fair head, dearest child, and with you, and round about you, sleeping and waking," answered the old man, laying his withered hand upon her:—these words proclaim him to be no "Atheist," at least.

"But do not kneel so near the door, lamb," he resumed, taking her by the arm: "if, indeed, you will *put me into the confessional*, so soon upon your visit, let it be farther out of hearing from the landing-place;" and this speech solves at once the mystery of his reserved way of life, though not in a manner that could have told in his favour among the curious people of the town. In fact, he was an ecclesiastic of Dora's creed, who, under the ban which for some time had been levelled at him and his brethren, had suffered much, yet was still willing to encounter any chance of suffering which his prudence and precautions could not shield him from, in order to dispense in secret the duties of his ministry to such of the Catholic residents of the town and its neighbourhood, as could be trusted with the knowledge of his real calling. More than one of his lay-friends, Protestant as well as Catholic (for, as has elsewhere been hinted, men were found in every creed anxious to baffle the literal operations of many of the statutes of the day), had involved themselves in his misfortunes by concealing him in

their houses, and at last, in extreme old age, he determined to run the remainder of his race alone, saving every one else from whatever trials might yet be in store for him. In this view, adopting an uncommon and foreign-looking dress, and suffering his beard to grow, he journeyed to the place of his present residence—for, hitherto, he had been wandering through remote parts of the kingdom—and assumed his trade of buying and selling old books. A few letters from former friends obtained him secret introductions to one or two of the more zealous Catholics around him, who eagerly, though in trepidation, often visited his poor retreat; by degrees, they communicated his secret to others; and thus was Dora Donovan made acquainted with the true character of old Beardy; and thus, he and she, and the rest of her family, became friends, and occasionally had stolen interviews together.

It will be seen that the old man's zeal for his disallowed religion must have been extreme. Indeed, some who knew him closely, and could observe the present constitution of his mind, in its details, believed that suffering and old age together had now made inroads upon an intellect of a high order, and once in a great state of cultivation. Occasional fits of dotage would, perhaps, be the best words to express the mental infirmities which were creeping upon him; and under their passing influence, friends, pausing outside his door ere they gave a concerted signal, have heard him mutter language that intimated his belief of the presence of evil company of a supernatural description, while, at other times, he would mix up with the discharge of his religious offices weak sentiments of the same nature, the growth of his individual mind, altogether distinct from his ecclesiastical character.

"I do not come to kneel, in confession, to-night father," answered Dora, in reply to the words he had last spoken to her; "my present situation scarce warrants it; and yet I come to crave counsel and direction, so far as my words may enable you to give it."

After a glance of surprise from his large beamy black eyes, he took her hand, seated her on his cricket stool, and sitting, himself, upon his straw-bed, desired her to explain.

Dora then began by inquiring, under what circumstances, if under any, might an oath be deemed as not binding.

He answered, only under two kinds of circumstances:—first, in case an oath be imposed by a threat of taking life, if it should be refused; next, in case it be an oath to do evil.

She sighed deeply and mournfully, as her heart

ledged, what it had never denied, that neither of these cases applied to her.

"But," continued the old man, "acquaint me of the nature of the oath which now troubles you, and of the person to whom you have made it, and I shall be the better enabled to counsel you."

Dora replied, that she could not do so, as one of the terms of the oath itself bound her to conceal that she had ever met the individual who had proposed it to her.

"Know I *the man?*" he demanded, putting what law-practitioners call a "leading question."

"Alas! you cannot, sure, know him, father."

"Not even by name?"

"How shall I answer, when I know not his name myself?"

"But it *was* a man?"

Dora hesitated, doubtful that she was already infringing upon her oath.

"You owned as much, but now, daughter," resumed the ancient priest, "wherefore you need not to answer. But where met ye? that, at the least, you may divulge without doing a sin."

"In the moonlight—in a lonesome place—in a deep wood," she answered, incoherently, yielding to former misgivings; "and oh, good father! if I have said that there I met *a man*, indeed, mayhap, it is better than my heart believes in!"

He arose and stood before her, shaking more than was his wont, while his bright eyes took a new and alarming expression.

"Beware of him! put not trust in him! keep no oath with him!" It seemed that Dora's superstitious allusion had struck upon the chord of dotage in the old priest's mind;—"He goeth about in many shapes—he useth many wiles—to age he comes as one of the aged, speaking wisdom—to youth he comes in comeliness, speaking flattery—in the one form, with me—and such as me—here in this miserable den—in the other form, with you, in the moonlight wood—keep no oath with him, I say! have not to do with him!—hold—rest you there a moment—rest you there, and speak not—" he tottered to a corner of the room, raised a loose board, took out a book of prayer, returned to his seat, opened it on his knees, turned over the leaves, with an aguish hand, and while thus occupied, continued to mutter, "Ay, ay; no escape from him—age he spares not, neither will he spare youth—and no presence spares he, and no place is strong or solitary against him—hark! even now as we go to defy him, he cometh!" Nancy shrieked abroad upon the

landing-place, and her companion, Jef, shouted loud enough to allow, indeed, of the belief that a horned-and-hoofed appearance had visited them, and then they were heard tumbling down-stairs together ; "Yea," continued the raving old man, "he is with us—daughter, look behind you!" Dora did so. The unfastened door of the little unfurnished room had been pushed half open, and in the shade of its far side, was standing her acquaintance of the gray mantle, his features still disguised ; and she had scarce observed him, when she heard him say, in a very low voice, "Dora Donovan, what the Priest has told you would not let you meet me to-morrow night, as you promised—and for that reason I come here to put you on your guard, by one word—your father and your sister want to part with you to any one who will take you—but Daniel D'Arcy will only take you to leave you—he loves another better—now the good night—" the man stepped out upon the landing-place, and was gone.

In a state nearly of insensibility, Dora sat gazing at the half open door, for some time, twisted round upon the priest's cricket stool. Presently she heard many persons below. They came rudely up the stairs, and into the room—authorities, and civil officers of the town, followed by soldiers. Swearing, as they passed her, she ventured to rush from their presence, nor did they make much opposition to her way. They were intent upon other business. They gained the old priest's straw bed ; he lay stretched upon it, his face downward. The foremost man, the same bailiff who had arrested Daniel D'Arcy when he would not inform against the poor schoolmaster, dragged him up by the shoulder, but after glancing into his face, said, with an oath,—

"Too late!—Well : I'll never put truth in my cousin's whisperins, agin ; this is the second time they failed me : D— ! not a stiver for all our throuble, boys!"—he let go his grasp, and the old man fell, like a heap of bones, upon his straw again. He feared no "discover" now—he was dead. When Nancy was applied to for an account of as much of these occurrences as it was expected she should reasonably explain, she said, that, "there, out on the lobby, she and Jef were whisperin' like friends, when the first thing that took a start out them, was a soft fut stalin' up the stairs—an' a woman's fut, they'd both make oath, into the bargain, by rason o' the rustling of her skirts : and, all of a sudden, she said, down in the throath, an' under her breath, "So, Nancy Dempsey, here you are, wid your boy at your side, after all your talkin' ;

an' then the fut went down : an' while Jef and herself sat shaking in their skins, not knowing what to be thinking, sure some one else, that they never hard on the stairs, at all, passed by them, and, with one touch of his little finger, wide open flew the poor priest's dour, an' then——"

But the sequel is known.

CHAPTER XV.

DANIEL D'ARCY had missed Dora from the house, soon after she bent her steps to the town to visit the old priest. He asked Helen to account for her absence, but was answered only with laughter and jest, although the young lady could have informed him more particularly, so far at least as to admit that her sister had repaired to the concealed clergyman upon religious purposes, which indeed, was all she knew of the matter.

His suspicions highly roused, Daniel walked out into the wood. Dora's conduct of the night before, taken along with her proceedings of this evening, began to appear very questionable to him. He dreaded to define, in his own breast, the exact conclusions which, however, where forming within it. But this unsettled state of thought only increased his smouldering passions.

He rambled into the little open space, in the thick of the wood, where his mother had once seen him drinking syllabub. It was about half an hour after Dora's departure for the town, and a fine summer's evening yet held sway over the young moonlight. Advancing towards the side of the retreat opposite to that by which he entered, he started back at seeing a woman reclining on the soft grass. She lay on her side, her fine form gracefully displayed, and one of her arms was thrown over her face, so as, together with the drapery of the sleeve, to conceal her features. Daniel's footsteps did not disturb her, and concluding that she slept soundly, he came closer to her, and more attentively observed her.

Her dress was showy and gay, and not made or worn with a view to a very careful concealment of her personal attractions. Peculiar as had been his previous humour, Daniel looked too long, and with too much interest. The slumberer mumbled, as if in her sleep, and he heard his own name half pronounced, in,

at least, a friendly voice. Surrendering himself, for an instant, to quite a new current of feeling, he held his breath to listen. The murmurings continued, and again his name was spoken, mixed up with a broken strain of soft and sorrowful reproach ; and, suddenly turning, Jinny Haggerty unveiled her features, opened her eyes, sat up, and, seeing him, shrieked, and seemed overcome by surprise, shame, and confusion.

Daniel would have sat at her side ; she started up, prudishly, and rejected his friendly greetings, saying,—“No, no, Masther Dan—that’s all over between us, and why not ? I wasn’t your aquals, and, my own fault be it, that I didn’t think as much, in time ; and on my own head be the grief and the troubles of my own mistake :—no, sir, you an’ I are broken friends, for ever an’ a day—in regard o’ *that*, I mane : not saying, at the same time, that I’m *not* your friend, in any way I can do you a good turn—for, indeed an’ deed I am, Masther Dan—an’ the heart o’ me sorry, this blessed moment, at the thoughts o’ the first good turn I’m come to the very spot we’re stannin’ in, to try an’ do for you.”

This speech greatly interested him, and he did not fail to press Jinny to a quick explanation. She rambled here and there, however from the point, taking much trouble to convince him, in her roundabout style, that he ought to give her full credit for candour and high-mindedness in what she would finally say, and never believe that she could be actuated by jealousy, or revenge upon a rival, to make a single misstatement, but rather, by the purest good wishes for his happiness and honour, to tell the whole truth. Admitting all she pleaded for, and burning with impatience, Daniel’s voice rose high, as still he urged her to go on.

“Very well, then, Masther Dan ; an’ now, mind me. You left the house, last night, to seek asther somebody in this wood ?”

“I did—I did ! Well ?

“You did ; see there, now ; I’m not going to say a word that your own self can’t bear me out in :—you did ; an’ afore you came up with that same body, you met a girl, wearin’ a blue cloak crossin’ your path ?”

“Yes ;” Daniel recollect ed that such a person, he knew, not whom, did certainly arrest his eye for a moment.

“It was myself, then, Masther Dan.”

“And what’s that to me ?”

“Oh, nothing, by coorse, comin’ across *me* or my likes : I don’t mane to argufy the thing with you, sir ; only maybe you’d

let me tell you, that when I troubled your way, for an instant, I was jest asther happenin' to fix *my* eyes on the body you were lookin' for, up an' down the wood."

" Well ? well ?"

" An', behould you, sir she was not all alone at the time I watched her."

" Her sister was by her side ?"

" No, in troth ; a tall man, wearin' a grandee's cloak, was by her side."

Daniel started ; stamped like a madman ; cursed Dora ; swore terrible vengeance against his unknown rival ; then suddenly turned his rage upon Jinny Haggerty ; notwithstanding all his promises to trust to her candour, and to give her full credit for good motives, bluntly charged her with telling him a false story, and with telling it, too, from jealousy and hatred of the excellent young lady she would slander."

" Maybe so, Masther Dan," answered Jinny, with great meekness ; " an, I expected this,"—very probably she now spoke the truth ; very probably, indeed, she *had* reckoned on so natural a burst of his temper, and, moreover, come prepared to meet and foil it :—" So, sir, say what you like to me, do what you like—kill me, if you like—my duty to you, an' to your good name, an' your family's, will be done, any how ; —but, Masther Dan, answer me jest one thing ; was she as kind to you, for the few days beforehand, as she used to be ?"

" No ! no ! no !" cried Dan, again stamping about.

" See there, again, now :—well maybe ; you can tell us another matther,—where is she, the prasent time ?"

" I do not know—gone out—and alone, I believe ; but I do not know whither."

" Why, then I do, Masther Dan."

" You have seen 'her in the wood this evening, too ?"

" I seen her in the streets o' the town, below, this evening, sir."

" Alone ?"

" Mind me, Masther Dan : take the little advice I 'm for givin' you, an' your own lips—the breath o' your own mouth—can make yon sartain whether or no Jinny Haggerty is wrongin' you or her : an' here's my notion :—jest ask her, the next time you happen to see her, if she didn't see the grandee in the gray cloak last night, an' discourse him, a good half hour ; ay, an' see him again, *this* night, in a lane off o' the main street o' the town, an'—"

" I 'll come on them, together !" interrupted Daniel ; in two minutes I'll be with them ! What lane, Jinny, what lane ??"

"I can tell you, sir, but I won't; stop, now, till you hear me out. If you miss 'em, asther all I'm tellin' you, you'd blame me, over again; and one sweet word from her 'ud make you think me the blackest creature undher the blessed sun: an' for that reason, don't run down the hill into the town, now, straight ahead like a mad bull, upon such a chance: but let me walk quietly afore you, an' look about me, till I find 'em together for you; an' put trust in one woman's word, when she tells you that another woman won't be in a hurry to quit the side of a body she'd like to be talkin' to."

"Furies! curses!" were the least moderate of the expressions with which Daniel assented to, and commented upon, this axiom.

"So that, sir, we may go to work, in a leisurely manner, an' sure, there's luck in leisure, I'm tould; an' the moment I have them fixed for you, grass won't grow undher my feet till I'm wid you, here, again, any how."

'Let us go, together, then; 'twill save time.'

"Nor that, neither, Masther Dan: you're well watched, to-night, every step you take; an' if you stir a single step out of your own grounds, towards the town, news of it 'ud run to *her and him*, like the wind, afore you; and then all our schames 'ud go for nothing: no, sir—promise that you'll wait, quietly, in this very spot, till—"

"Quietly Jinny!" he suddenly shed some tears.

"Till you see my face from the town, again; and promise at once, an' with a thtrue heart, or never a word more you'll hear from my lips, Masther Dan; though, as I said afore, you were to kill me dead for keepin' my secret."

Thus adinonished, he had nothing to do but assent to Jinny's arrangements, and then she rapidly left him. His feelings during her absence must be imagined. It was an hour before she came back. Previous to mentioning what then occurred between them, another individual shall for a moment be sought after.

Dora ran out of the old priest's house into the lane, and thence into the main street, and she was clearing the town, when her haste and agitation caused her to stumble and fall. Her senses forsook her. Recovering, she found herself carefully and respectfully supported by a young man, whose face was not quite strange to her, although she could not recollect his name, nor where she had before seen him. Notwithstanding the deference of his manner, Dora felt abashed at

being held upon his arm, and, incoherently muttering her thanks, she stood for herself, and was moving towards Hugh D'Arcy's house.

" You are not able for the road, yet, Miss," said the young person, " without help: an', indeed, Miss Dora Donovan, you may lean on my arm, or my shoulder, as more befitting, without fear or uneasiness: it becomes me to do a service to any friend o' the family you are visiting with, the present time; for though they sent me adrift, lately, along with all my people, yet me and mine owe them more kindness for ould times, than they will ever be able to make us forget."

" You know my name, and I have seen you, before this night?" asked Dora.

" You have, Miss: I'm Dannis Haggerty, that the sister o' me brought into disgrace with Misther Hugh D'Arcy, an' gave you a fright, the same evenin' that she as well as myself is now long sorry in the heart for: but, as I said afore, don't let the knowledge of who I am hinder you from taking my help, to-night, when you want it so badly: I can walk in your footprints, any how, to guard you on the road home, that's not free from danger at such an hour o' the night-time, Miss Dora."

Agreeing with his last remark, Dora accepted his proffered service of walking after her till they should come near the mansion, under the roof of which she would be fully protected; so, she led the way along the moon-lit road.

For some time, perfect silence was observed between them. Suddenly, her temporary protector asked,—

" Will I have lave, Miss Dora Donovan, in all respect an' duty, to put you one question?"

" Certainly," Dora answered; " but no doubt it would be one quite fit for her to hear."

" Oh, then, little fear that it won't, Miss; or, sure, if it *does* sound to be a strrange one, without my knowing it, your good heart 'ill make excuses for a boy that hasn't much of the larnin', but that has his feelings like a Christian crature, for his kith an' kin at the same time. An' sure 'tis about one of my kin I'll be bould enough to speake to you; about Jinny, the only sister o' me, an' the only daughter of her ould father—I'm sorry to say it, Miss, for her sake as well as my own an' ould Peter Haggerty's, but she's a wild slip—or used to be—afore she came into the town, to a service, in one house with myself; an', in troth, I'm afeard of her, still, on the head o' the same body she took up with, when we were all livin' in the ould wood; an' if I had any other manes o' comin' by the know-

ledge I want, sure I'd never think of botherin' you, Miss, on a matter o' the kind ; only, since Misther D'Arcy turned us off, no one in his house 'ill discoorse me ; so that it's what I'm driven at is this, Miss Dora, saving your presence,—maybe it comes in your way to hear, lately, if Jinny does ever stale out to the wood, of an odd time, to be *cushoring** wid Masther Dan, the brave boy?"

Dora's heart leaped. In one glance of thought, she brought together Jinny's wrathful and jealous attack upon her in the wood, the very first evening she had met Daniel D'Arcy, the warning of her unknown friend, and this seemingly natural anxiety of Dennis Haggerty about his sister's present proceedings, and poor Dora felt convinced that her lover was totally unworthy of her esteem, if, indeed, he had not acted so as to command her indignant contempt. But a sense of her own respectability, and of the delicacy of the subject, in her present situation, enabled her to suppress much outward show of emotion, while, loosely, carelessly, and distantly, she answered Dennis's question.

"By the sky above us ! there she is, hurrying across the field to the edge of the wood, this blessed minute !" now cried Dennis.

Looking forward, Dora saw, indeed, a female figure, in quick motion from a point of the road before them to the skirts of the wood.

"And," continued Dennis, "that's Masther Dan, if he's alive, now starting out through the trees to meet her, the shameless baggage !"

"'Tis he, in truth," assented Dora, in a tone that fully expressed her feelings, as she stopped suddenly.

"Well, I'll ketch her now, face to face with him !" resumed Dennis ; "what I'm long wishin' for, an' she long deservin'. Good night, Miss Dora ; you're come in sight o' the house, an' won't want my help any farther."

"Stop !" said Dora, "I will go with you. Ay," she muttered, "to catch them, face to face,—I, too ;" and deprived of the power of acting or thinking with her usual sense and delicacy, Dora accordingly hurried off the road in the company of Dennis.

They had, indeed, seen Jinny repairing to the wood to keep her appointment with Daniel. Him, too, they had seen, driven by his furious impatience, from the secluded spot fixed

* Exchanging confidence.

for their re-meeting, to reconnoitre her approach upon the verge of the wood. And they saw more before the two figures eluded their eyes by turning under the shadows of the trees : Jinny was received in Daniel's extended arms, apparently casting herself into them ; such, at least, seemed the certain expression of the action, in the weak light, and at the distance, by and from which Dora and Dinnis made their observations. But it must be added, that accidentally or really, Jinny had tripped just as she gained Daniel's side, and so far as he was concerned, that he held out his arms only to hinder her from falling.

"Now ! now ! tell me where I can find them together !" cried Daniel to his spy.

"I won't tell you here," she answered, quickly freeing herself from his grasp, and pushing towards the retreat in the middle of the wood : "not here, sir,—you are watched, I tell you—watched this moment—folly me, folly!"

He complied, uttering loud remonstrances. They gained the spot required. Jinny dropped sitting on the grass, much exhausted, as she resumed—"Keep yourself quiet an' rasonable now, Masther Dan, for I have to inform you—"

"That you could not find them for me ! that they have escaped me ! that you have deceived me ! deceived me either in your present turn, or from the beginning—as I said and hoped at first !"

"Quiet, I bid you, sir, and listen afore you ate me up in a mouthful. I made all the haste I could into the town : I was hurrying to the place I knew was appointed between them ; I met them at the dour o' the wicked house, comin' out agin me, I stepped aside : they were for partin' ; and then he took her hand in his, and put another hand round her neck, she doin' the same by him ; an' then they turned their lips to one another, an' gave and took a kiss, Masther Daniel, that had in it a meaning an' a story of a good many others that went afore it, an' a pleasant thought of a good many others to come aifter it."

"You are lying to me now, at any rate !" screamed Daniel ; "this could never be ! Dora Donovan to do this ! I can't see her before me, in my mind, doing it ! 'Tis impossible ! as impossible as if she knelt there, where you sit, holding down her father, or her sister by the throat, after murdering the one or the other ! You are lying to me, I say, Jinny Haggerty !" he knelt and grasped both her shoulders—"you are !—ay,

and you must tell me that you are ! Tell me so, before you leave this wood !”

“ Ay, sir, now you *are* for choking me, or braining me, I see,” resumed Jinny, still coolly enough ;—“ but whist ! listen ! here’s some one comin’ I think, to hindher you, Masther Dan,” returning his rude grasp by impressively catching his arm, and lowering her voice in a remarkable manner. “ Give ear to one whisper from me, and call your wits about you—quick, or we won’t have time to speake or act sinsibly. What would you say, if they only parted at the door of that house, to meet here again this very night ?”

“ Here ?—where ?”

“ In this wood.”

“ Make out that to me, and I’ll believe all !” he replied, letting his hands fall by his sides, while his voice was not now louder than Jinny’s.

“ Maybe you can make it out for yourself, sir, widout help from me ; an’ I wish you may, to get me free o’ the scrape I’d be in among her people, if they know I made or meddled between ye both. But if you come across her here, will you be satisfied in your mind ? or, supposing not, can’t you ax her, as I said afore, who she saw last night near the place you an’ I are now discoorsin’ one another ? An’ did she see the man to-night, down in the town ;—Harkee, Masther Dan—bid her tell you, morebetoken, what took her into the town at day-break this mornin’ ?”

“ She *was* there, Jinny ?”

“ Or else the eyes o’ me are not worth pickin’ out, an’ throwin’ to the cats, sir.”

“ Thankee, Jinny, thankee ; I *am* quite satisfied in my mind now, as you say.” Daniel had not before heard of Dora’s visit to old Beardy—she regained the house while he yet remained a-bed—and this sudden communication of the fact, giving apparently a fresh proof of the total estrangement of her confidence, overwhelmed him.—“ Quite satisfied, Jinny ; and much behoulden to you for putting me on my guard—in troth, I am.” His voice had been breaking, and at last, not knowing what he did, Daniel covered his face with his hands, and cast his head upon Jinny’s lap, sobbing out, “ Mother o’ Heaven ! Mother o’ Heaven ! what is to become of me now !”

In this equivocal situation, Dinnis Haggerty and Dora Donovan came up to him in the retreat. Dinnis quickly advanced, while Dora only stopped within view. And “ Now,

you brazen-faced creature!" cried Dinnis, seemingly in a great rage—"have I found you out at last?"

The girl, uttering exclamations of terror and confusion, avoided a blow he aimed at her, and disappeared ; Daniel jumped up and confronted him, while Dinnis continued. "As to you, Masther Daniel, I have nothing to say : if you can make a fool of every poor innocent young *colleen* you meet, why no blame to you, but the more shame to themsefs ; gentlemen, like you, with your first youth on you—"

"Fellow!" interrupted Daniel, hoping to vent some of his fury—"what do you mean by all this talk and palaver?"

"Nothing to you, sir, I say again. I want to be friends with you, if you'll let me, as bound to do by you an' your family, for all that's come an' gone—yes, indeed, Masther Dan; but," he went on in a whisper, "who's that standing by, all the while?"

Dora was turning off, sickened and disgusted with him at heart, as Daniel turned to her. He darted after her, seized her hand, and said—"Stop Madam Dora Donovan!"

"At your desire, Master Daniel D'Arcy? or even at your command, after what has happened?"—she struggled to free her hand.

"Oh, no, to be sure—after what has happened—no, indeed," laughed Daniel ; then fiercely, "and you dare to make it your boast to me in this fashion?—you dare to tell me—and worse than tell me—that—"

"Let me go, sir! for *this* I do tell you, we can never speak to one another again."

"Well," he resumed, affecting great calmness, "very well. But why? Sure, for the sake of what's to be past and gone, you'll tell me *that*."

"You but insult me anew, sir, to ask me to tell you ; but surely you must know I was observing you long enough here, to make my eyes and heart certain that the love you have lately offered me is shared with a mean and unhappy creature,—Let go my hand, I say, or my voice shall be heard at the house, and call out one who will force you to let it go!"

"Oh," said Daniel scoffingly, as she spoke the last words, while he only dwelt upon those which had immediately preceded them ;—"Oh, oho! and that's it, is it?—that's the good pretence ; that's the handsome come-off; ay, if I was born a fool—a stuttering, mumbling, giggling idiot to mind it.—Come, Madam Dora, what brought you here to-night?"

"To satisfy myself that you are the worthless fellow I find you to be, Daniel D'Arcy."

"More of it! more of it!—but it won't serve your turn, sweet young lady. Listen! I'll end the matter between us.—What sent you into the town at daybreak this morning?"

Her mind started and changed, for now she got the first perception of his being jealous of her; and if he suspected all her late adventures, as well as he seemed to know of her stolen visit to old Beardy, Dora farther trembled for the consequences.

"You don't answer," he resumed, observing indeed, that a new emotion kept her silent. "And do you know why, our fine dame? I'll tell you—because you dare not!—ay, and I have another question for you that will knot the roots of your soft little tongue together—what sent you into the town to-night—and what man did you see there?—ay, by the blessed light, and another! where did you meet him *before* to-night—was it not at the turn of the path where I found you standing the *last* night—the very last night of all! And that's my third question," he continued, his voice and manner changing into deep vehemence; "and the only one I'll ever trouble you with, Dora Donovan; and so, take your hand, now; take it, and keep it from mine!" he roughly swung it out of his clasp, and turning his back upon her, strode heavily away. Without uttering a word, Dora walked towards the house.

"You see how this is, Dinny Haggerty," said Daniel, coming up with his old friend, who had not moved from the spot upon which Daniel left him, when he ran in pursuit of Dora, notwithstanding his brotherly indignation against Jinny—"you have overheard us, and you have seen us, and so, you see how it is;—you see that she, too, casts me off, and is a traitor to me: Dora Donovan; the last creature alive I thought I could put my whole trust in; that seemed to pity me, when they all were distant with me, or thought little of me; that told me over and over, she loved me, and would love me, though the world hated me; and yet, all the while, you see, Dinny—you see——"

"Hould up against it, Masther Dan, and don't spake in that voice, and crying down them tears, or you'll kill me, as as well as yourself," said Dinnis in a sympathizing manner and tone, when he saw that a convulsion in poor Daniel's throat stopped his farther utterance; "by the hand o' my body, sir, but it's a hard case, and I'm sorry for you in the bottom o' my heart——"

"Thanks, Dinny, thanks ;" Daniel felt for his hand, and pressed it closely and often.

"But sure all's not lost that's in danger, Masther Daniel ; Miss Dora may be brought round again, and soon——"

"To love *me* ! and to be believed by *me* !—nay ; even if believed—to be listened to by *me*—taken to the heart by *me* !—" he relapsed into high passion—"by the Great Judge of all things ! I would as soon earn my bread by holding the stirrup of any upstart that calls to bait his horse at the inn in the town, below, as I would marry Dora Donovan—*now*!"

"But I didn't say that," observed Dinny.

"What do you mean, then ?"

"Nothing—nothing at all, Masther Daniel, when you look so cantankerous at a body that 'ud be your friend, though some people might say you gave him little rason for wishing to be that same to you."

"You speake the truth, Dinny, you speake the truth—your friendship to me, at present, is indeed doing a good for an evil : so, go on."

"Oh, no matter about it, this night, Masther Dan ; maybe we'd all be in a cooler mind, another night, or day ; only there's no harm in casting about to see how could we have a little bit of decent, na' thral revenge for the bad usage put on you, any how ;—but, quitting the young mistress, for the present time, can't we do any thing else, in regard of any body else ?"

"You are right !" assented Daniel : "I ought to have started that thought myself, but, in the flurry, it missed me. Dinny Haggerty, I put it into your hands ; I will use my own skill and knowledge to find out who and what he can be ; but you have more time, more opportunities, can make more inquiries, and will be cooler——"

"Never fear me : but what's to take up your time now, Masther Dan ?"

"My brother Marks is expected home, by to-morrow evening."

"Then he may be after landing on Ireland's ground already, sir ?" asked Dinnis, expressively.

"Very probable ; nay, may have landed many days ago——"

"Ay, indeed, Masther Dan ?" queried his counsellor a second time, and with a still more marked manner ; but Daniel remained unobservant.

"Ay, indeed—so, even on his account, I cannot spare much time—but you, Dinny, you will leave no stone unturned ; no

hole or corner unsearched, to bring me word who *is* the accursed villain that has robbed me of my very last earthly happiness!—to tell me his name, and where he is to be found! and then, Dinny—then for the little revenge you spoke of a while ago."

"I'll ferret him out for you, if his nose is above ground, or above wather, Masther Daniel, and ask not as much as thanks for my throuble."

"But you shall have more than thanks, Dinny; I don't forget ould times,—our ould boyish days together; to say nothing of the good turn you are now doing me, or what I owe you for treating you ill, and making others treat you worse; and I am soon to be rich, Dinnis, and maybe you might share with me: no more words on it, now; I see you want to refuse, but you shall not, and no more words on any thing else, either—it grows late, and I have a mind to be alone, it will do me good, so *bannochth-lath*;—as soon as you get a word of news, send a *gorcoon* up here to ask me out to meet you, and I depend on you, to the marrow in your bones, Dinny,—that's all."

They were about to part, when Dinnis respectfully and commiseratingly entreated Daniel not to give way to his sorrow by staying out, moping about the fields and the wood, the livelong night, for he was quite sure he would not go home to bed; and he suggested, that grief could sooner be cured in another way, namely, by a visit to the little private room of the Cross-Keys, in the town. Daniel wavered, but took the hint. He was in that state of mind which prompts men to seek relief or forgetfulness in the new excitement of liquor: besides, at Dinny's invitation, he had before sat down in a public-house, and at this resumption of their old friendship, the precedent was not forgotten. Good night to Daniel.

CHAPTER XVI.

To his never-failing Red-house Daniel staggered home, long after broad daylight, next morning, shouting in inebriated triumph over his sorrow, in answer to the singing and chirping of the birds around his path. Past noon, he awoke in dulled possession of his senses, and at his first stir in bed, a curiously-folded letter fell from the coverlid upon the ground. He

caught it up. It was directed to him, in Dora Donovan's large, elaborate, school-girl hand, and contained some lines, of which the phraseology shall be preserved, while the spelling only is amended.

"What you asked me, last night, I can never answer—never; and the reason that now keeps me silent, kept me so at the time you put the questions. Moreover, I can never tell you, or any one else, as much as what the reason itself is: it lies between my God and me—let that be enough. But I will take my own part, by saying to you, Daniel D'Arcy, that you have no right to suppose I have done wrong, to you or to myself, because it is out of my power to answer you. I never gave you, or any human creature, cause to think so poorly of me. And although from my lips you can never, never hear more on the subject—no, nor the father I love, nor the sister, nor the priest in the confessional,—go you, Daniel and make all the inquiries you like, ask every body you know, and don't know, ay, and for the future watch me with the cat's eyes, every step I walk, to my dying day, and see if you will be able to speak one bad word, in the truth, of Dora Donovan.

"Daniel D'Arcy, we are now parted, for ever; but listen well to what I say. Whatever you may think, whoever is the evil body has put hard thoughts of me into your head, I do defy, in my own heart, and on my knees, before the throne of Mercy and Truth, you and them:—Daniel D'Arcy, I will give you a proof: until the moment when I came on you in the wood, last night, I loved you dearly, truly, and entirely, and never had the thought of another darkened my mind, and it never shall: after bidding good-b'ye to you, for the time we are to be together in this world, it never shall.

"I wish I could leave your father's house this moment; but I am afraid to tell my father the true wish of my heart for leaving it—and I would tell him the true one, if I told him any:—afraid of bringing trouble into your family—not afraid of any thing on my own account. Besides, your father and mother press us so much to stay, to welcome home your brother Marks, this evening: but I will not come down stairs to meet you alone, before he arrives; and I tell you as much, to show you that my mind is fixed, and to save you the trouble of asking about me."

The first part of this epistle had very nearly convinced Daniel that, without any farther explanation, and with every appearance still against her, Dora was innocent; and as true to him as the sun is to the summer; and under a reflux of all his love and tenderness, as well as from a high sense of justice, to

say nothing of a hope of clearing himself in her eyes, he felt disposed to answer her letter, by professing the most implicit faith in her assertions, and, in turn, requesting her to believe, that his interview with Jinny Haggerty was not even meant to be a reprehensible one. But the last paragraph overthrew all his good intentions. Its general tone felt hard and harsh upon his mind ; and the expressed determination not to come down stairs until his brother was to be " welcomed home," again maddened him. Such was the crooked state of his perceptions, that he saw nothing in this but—absolutely—a determination to make amends for the loss of one brother by fascinating another. So, Dora's communication received no answer of any kind from Daniel ; and once more, the only relief he would permit himself to feel, was when he turned to anticipate the probable information which Dunnis Haggerty had promised to collect for his advantage. Lying stretched in one corner or another of his fields, that day, Daniel often grasped his hands tight, in imaginary pressure round the neck of his yet unknown rival.

In such a spirit, his mother sent him a summons to attend her, along the road, to the hill, from the summit of which, it was hoped, that the Fly Diligence, expected to contain, with its other inmates, Marks D'Arcy, could be descried, afar off. The good lady's disappointment, that evening, will be remembered ; also, Daniel's question, as they descended the hill to return homeward ; " But for all this, mother, will not Helen make Dora come down stairs to us, the night ? "

Helen certainly expended all their entreaties upon Dora, to induce her serious and now afflicted sister to meet Daniel's half wish ; but the consistent young lady remained inexorable : and still Daniel would see nothing in her conduct but unreasonable aversion to him, and a very probable design on Marks. He did not forget, indeed, that the original cause of his anger towards her had arisen from her presumed, nay, proved infidelity to him, with some other person unknown, who was not Marks : still, the concluding passage of her letter, convinced him that her fickle fancy was again about to change—had changed, indeed, by anticipation ; although, how even the most variable of womankind could so perfectly transfer her last preference, in the course of a few hours, to a new object, nay, to an unseen object, might have proved a puzzling question to Daniel in a more sane state of mind.

During the next day, the thought of meeting an early-loved brother, after many years' absence, caused a favourable diver-

sion in Daniel's gloomy reveries. When his mother had called him to her side, the previous evening, to go and look out for the Diligence, his heart had not had time to assert its real interest in the matter ; then, however, it had been roused from more selfish abstractions ; and, afterward, his coming encounter with Marks would start up before his imagination, almost as livelily as his calculations of a message from Dinnis Haggerty.

In reality, the meeting between the two brothers has been seen to regenerate all the old love which Daniel had ever conceived for Marks : and it must be added, that, during their walk homeward from the town, and particularly during their pause at a well-known stile, and their glance over a well-remembered scene, of which the white-coated miller and his rat-catching dog still formed the living accompaniments, Daniel held not one jealous sentiment of his elder brother, upon any account, although there existed many others more really calculated to jaundice his mind, than, a few hours before, the idea of Marks's probable success with Dora had done. Daniel stood by without envy, too, after they entered their old home, while Marks received the weeping, proud embraces of his mother ; and while Hugh D'Arcy, after hugging him, like an ecstatic bear, flourished his stick in triumph over the head of "the stranger." Nay, poor Daniel was as joyful as any of them. But he had to witness and withstand another scene. Mr. Donovan led in his two daughters. From the moment Dora appeared, her eyes fixed on Marks—only, or chiefly to avoid the regards of her discarded lover—but he would not imagine that ; and at the friendly though bashful warmth with which she received Marks' bold salute on her cheek, Daniel bit his lip, and wheeled round to the window.

"Iould you how it would be, you poor, unhappy, ugly Christian," whispered Hugh in his ear—"just turn round again, and look at them, now—happy death to me, but he's coaxing her from you, before your eyes, at the first offer ;—musha, I pity you!"

Facing the company, in obedience to this second specimen of his worthy father's judicious interference, Daniel saw Marks seated between the sisters, holding a hand of each, and making Helen laugh, and Dora smile and blush, as, with the ease of a gentleman and of a man of the world, and the success of a young, handsome, tall, finely-shaped, and finely-attired gallant, he alternately addressed each, or said something for their joint amusement. Dan unconsciously looked down on his own embrogued feet ; he *would* wear brogues since he became a

farmer—and then, he glanced at his low, sturdy figure, in a mirror before him, and just was able to curb an impulse to hurry out of the house, by the reflection that such conduct, at the moment of his brother's coming home, would be exceedingly ungracious, and also might betray to Marks, in common with every other beholder, what he felt to be the humiliating feelings which at present devoured him. Averting his eye from the detested scene, he caught up Mark's small sword, from a table near at hand, and dropping in a chair, began to draw it half way out of the scabbard and plunge it in again, thus unconsciously diverting the tremulousness of his hand and heart.

"Daniel, my boy, you seem to be greatly entertained with that new plaything," observed Marks, after the noise which Dan made had often interrupted his conversation with the sisters; he spoke, however, in perfect good-humour."

"Yes, Marks; and little wonder that I am entertained with it, if you only think a moment; '*tis the first of the kind I ever handled, you know;*' the whole of this speech was sharply uttered, but the last words had peculiar meaning.

His brother looked a little surprised, but calling to mind his own previous observations of some hidden grief in Daniel's breast, relapsed into smiles, and said—"Then, buckle it round your loins, and keep it, and get used to it, Dan; I have another among my baggage."

"Oh, and sure I thank you kindly, Marks, but I have little use of a fine thing like it; at least, if I am to wear it, you'll have to provide for me in other ways, beforehand."

"How so, Dan?"

"Just lend me an ould pair o' your grand Spanish boots, and a feather for my hat, and one of your cast-off suits," answered Dan, very savagely.

"Tut, tut, now, man alive!"

"Though," continued Daniel, "I'm afeard you needn't be at the trouble, for my sake, by reason there's a certain Micky Dooly, the 'torney, down in the town, won't leave it long with either of us,—no, nor the late new one you have among your baggage, into the bargain, Marks."

"Oh, I fear nothing hostile from Micky; as I told you before, Dan, he and I have become great friends."

"I'm sorry for it, Marks: for, as I tould you afore, I wouldn't exchange a word with the mean upstart, to win myself a fortune as great as you have won abroad."

It was evident that Daniel, rendered blind to his own fierce unamiability by the prepossessions of his mind, and the bitter-

ness and battling of his heart, was in a humour to go on saying any thing that could hurt or deprecate his brother in the presence of Dora. Although Marks did not understand the matter quite to this length, he thought it full time to try and sooth the growling wild-beast before him ; and, accordingly, he arose from his pleasant seat between the disconcerted maidens, and approaching Daniel, in his window-niche, whispered, good-humouredly—“ Tell me, Dan, which of the two ? and tell me quickly and truly ; for I have a mighty reason for asking you ?”

“ Which of what two, Marks ?—what do you mean ?”

“ Come now, Dan ; don’t be sly with me—which of those two dear little angels ?”

“ The two young women, there ?”

“ Well, yes ; the two young women, there.”

“ Which of the two o’ them ?—how, Marks ? Sure I don’t understand you, at all.”

“ Oh, Dan, Dan ! which of them have you enthroned in your heart of hearts ! which of them do you doat on, to death ! and which of them returns your raptures with a gentle preference !—that’s my question.”

“ And a good long one it is, Marks, and fitter for a bright scholar, like yourself, to answer, than for a yellow-clay clod, like me ; I’ll answer it, howsoever ; neither o’ the two, Marks ; neither o’ them cares one blade o’ grass about me, nor I about either o’ them, and that’s what I have to tell you, brother Marks, this blessed an’ holy night.”

“ A quarrel, Dan, so soon !”

“ Ask me no questions, Marks, and sure I’ll tell you no stories.”

“ Well, well, Dan—remember your admissions, that’s all ; and don’t blame any body if you see any body take fair advantage of them,” and Marks walked towards his mother.

“ You outlandish jackanapes !” muttered Dan, between his teeth, eyeing askance his brother’s tall and graceful figure, and his easy motion, as he left him ; and the little playful words Marks spoke at parting, fell and festered upon his raw heart like a serious threat of rivalry.

Marks had, indeed, spoken but in a lightsome mood, calculated, he hoped, to baffle the observation of others upon Daniel’s uncouthness, as well as to make Daniel himself smile. And this was proved by the subject of the low-toned conversation which he immediately entered into with his mother : for it consisted exclusively of anxious though short questions from him, and of answers from her, as to Daniel’s

present rude humour ; the state of his understanding with Dora being given by Mrs. D'Arcy as its cause. But what cannot be distilled into poison through the twisted alembic of a jealous mind ? Still Daniel saw only designs against his happiness—schemes, in fact to ravish Dora from him, and confer her upon “ the richest brother and the best scholar,” in this *tête-à-tête* between his mother and Marks ; particularly when, at a beck, Mr. Donovan joined them, and that he now and then caught the glances of the three prime counsellors turned expressively to him. How he would have scoffed at whoever might have whispered to him, for the moment, that they were but interchanging opinions to try and do him good.

The evening meal was announced to be ready in another room. Daniel would lead no one in ; yet he took it as a fresh insult, and a fresh proof of a cabal against him, when Marks, after hesitating some moments, and looking towards him, offered his hand to Dora ; Mrs. D'Arcy having gone out with Mr. Donovan, and Hugh with Helen. Neither would Daniel speak to any one, nor answer a question civilly ; yet again he conceived himself to be treated with slight and disrespect, when Marks began to reply to the natural inquiries of all his friends, by describing his adventures in Spain, and along the road homeward. Dora seemed much interested in all he said, and more than once asked him questions upon subjects quite beyond Daniel's comprehension, and the jealous and ill-tempered fool suffered himself to be nearly deprived of reason. Once, indeed, his fury exploded in a laugh of wrath and derision which startled the whole company : but no words, and no farther sounds, passed Daniel's lips.

After this, Marks ceased his interesting relations, and, following the example of every one else at the supper-table excepting Daniel, began a conversation in a low tone with Dora. She was evidently agitated, though not disagreeably, by his new and confidential topic, and often discussed it with spirit. “ This moment, and before my very face, as my poor foolish father said, he is stealing the last of her heart from me ! ” thought Daniel. Now, Marks was anxiously, zealously, yet delicately, engaged in endeavouring to prevail upon Dora to restore her whole heart, first and last, to the blinded Daniel. Having learned from Mrs. D'Arcy that, so far as could be observed, his present painful and alarming mood was the result of a misunderstanding with his mistress, Marks availed himself of the first opportunity to plead his brother's cause, and restore

peace to his bosom, and tranquillity to his scowling brow and rude manner.

While Daniel drew such very different conclusions, however, from the scene before him, and had his fearful mistake, and the feelings it begot, farther added to by the real coldness of his mother to him, in consequence of his own unamiability, and by the angry taunts of his father, his attention was diverted into a new channel. In passing at the back of his chair, Nancy tapped his shoulder, unseen by any one else ; and when she caught his eye, notified by a very expressive gesture, that he should follow her out of the room. He accordingly started up and left his friends, with an abruptness that once more pained and alarmed them.

"I'm sure I don't know, an' can't guess, what's wantin' o' you by any livin' sowl at this hour o'the night," began Nancy, in a voice of grave remonstrance—"no good, I'm sore afeard—"

"But I *am* wanted out?" he asked, fiercely.

"Masther Dan, give over them bullyin' ways wid me, an' I'll thank you," replied Nancy, anxious to retain some show of authority, although he really frightened her ; "it's all I want to tell you is this—there's as ugly a little limb as I ever seen wid my eyes waitin' to spake to you outside o' the aveny gate."

"Haggerty's gorçoön!" thought Daniel, quickly turning from her to leave the house.

"An' where am I to tell the company you're for goin' again, sir, at such an hour o' the night?" questioned Nancy.

"Home—to the farm—to the *duoul*, if you like!" He hurried forth.

"The Lord be between us an' all harum!" ejaculated Nancy to herself, as she made a holy sign on her forehead, and smote her breast ; "an' sure, if I did tell 'em so, I'm afeard they'd hear no lies."

In a very short time, Daniel came up with his old friend ;—"the ugly little limb," who had conveyed to the house the prudent intimation which Dinnis thought fit to confine himself to, was sent away, and they stood alone.

"Well, Dinnis," began Daniel.

"I wasn't idle since I saw you, sir," said his friend.

"You need not tell me that, I was sure you would be true to me ; but—well?"

"By the sowl of the mother that bore me, I 'm afeard to tell you, Masther Dan!" The listener drew back, knitted his brows, and fixed his eyes upon him, in the imperfect light, as

with a boding heart, and a cadence subdued to its hushed interest, he asked, "Why?"

"Because it's against all natural things, sir,—because it's enough to split your heart, if that same heart were as hard and as could as the rock!"

"Supposing so, go on. You *have* discovered who it was that—twice at least—met her alone?"

"God pity us all, Masther Dan! I'm thinking I have, sure enough."

"Tell me his name."

"Wait, sir, wait: not so sudden—thank o' yourself first, an' what you'll be likely to do; or let me put you up to one or two little matthers aforehand; an' promise you won't lose your own mind, stannin' fornt me any how—promise to be quiet, sir."

"I am so, as you see."

"Very well, Masther Dan. First of all, then, I'd demand of you—wasn't a certain body expected home yesterday evening?"

"You know he was, as well as I do."

"Ay, an' many evenings afore yesterday evening, too, Masther Dan?"

"You are right, quite right."

"I believe, sir, morebetoken, 'tis more nor a week since he landed in Ireland?"

"So I understood from my mother."

"So that, for any night of amost the whole week, he might be here and there, out of Dublin to a good distance, by help of a good horse, faster nor Misther Hutchisson's Dilly 'ud carry him, any how—not saying that he didn't come home to ye in the Dilly at last, for reasons of his own, maybe, sir?"

Dinnis heard Daniel's teeth grinding, before he assented to the great probability of all these suppositions.

"But, man, I want the whole of it to be cleared up as bright as the day to me," resumed Daniel.

"Well, sir—black ought to be the night I say it in! there's people I discoursed with of late, that tell me as much as that they seen him about the place here, more than twice or three times, either, the last week—"

"How did they know it was he?"

"By reason of seeing him, an' hearing him talked of in Dublin aforehand, Masther Dan."

"And you can depend on the people you now mention to me?"

"They are as true to me, as I am to you, sir."

"Good. Have you any thing else to say? As yet the thing is only very suspicious—not made out quite certain."

"Master Dan, do you remember any one telling you afore to-night, whether the man that met Miss Dora Donovan in the wood—

"Stop! do not call her by her name any more; say, 'met *her* in the wood:' and Dinnis Haggerty, as you to see the light of the next day that is to shine upon the world—never once sound *his* name to me at all!"

"Well, sure I won't sir; only now, as I feared would happen, you're beginning to let yourself loose on me, for nothing that I know of."

"Never mind me, Dinnis; I did not mean it; and you see I am as quiet as a lamb over again. So, go on. 'Do I remember any one telling me whether or no the man that met her twice in the wood—' Well, sir?"

"Whether or no he was a tall man or a low man—a young man or an ould man, or what kind o' clothin' he wore?" pursued Dinnis.

"Yes, your sister told me that he was a tall man—"

"So is—" began Dinnis.

"Hola, silence! I understand you. That's enough. She did not speak of his age, as well as I remember; but she called him the grandee in the gray cloak—"

"Go home you, then, Master Dan, an' see what's the colour o' the cloak the grandee that's under your father's roof to-night thravelled to ye from Dublin town in."

"I will," said Daniel, after a pause; and he turned and strode slowly away, his head drooped upon his chest, and his eyes bent on the earth.

"Stop a bit first, sir," resumed Dinnis walking after Daniel; "here's a little token poor Jinny found asther him, that night in the wood, dropped on the spot *he* an' *she*—the young mistress I mean—were stannin on, when he run to hide himself at the sound o' your voice, sir."

"Thanks, over again," said Daniel, gazing vaguely at a handkerchief which Dinnis put into his hand, in a crumpled state. "What is it?" he continued, unfolding it.

"There'll be no use in your looking into it here, sir: wait till you're at home, an' no one near, in the candlelight; then, thry one o' the corners."

"Very well; and so I will," still assented Daniel; and he

squeezed the handkerchief in his palm, thrust it into his pocket, and continued his way to his father's house.

He did now knock violently at the door. Nancy, as she went to open it at his summons, little suspected it was he she had to let in ; still less did she expect to see what she believed and defined to be " a great settlement come over his face, an' the angry cloud clane gone." In fact, her young master's present passions lay too deep for her divination.

Daniel remained in the hall till she had retired to her kitchen. He had seen the cloak thrown upon a marble table. He approached, and looked closely at it : it was gray. Providing himself with a light, he stepped slowly up to his old chamber ; locked the door ; took out and unfolded the handkerchief ; peered at all its corners, and the very last he examined had the D'Arcy crest embroidered upon it, surmounted by the initials " M. D'A."

For some time afterward he sat in a chair, holding the handkerchief by the corner. Amid all his other thoughts, it occurred to Daniel himself, how strange it was that he did not now storm, and rave, and play the madman, as upon mere suspicion of what he at last deemed proved, indeed upon comparatively slight and different provocations altogether, he formerly had done.—" But," continued Daniel, in his reverie, and he had sufficient command over his mind even to philosophize—" fears and suspicions are like the strong liquor that makes us drunk—downright certainty makes us sober."

He caught the image of his own face in a little mirror, which, from its slanting position, reflected only the shadowed side of the room he had chosen to sit in, and his features, amid the shadow, vaguely and ghost-like, and set in their new expression. And that new expression, faithfully indicating the state of his soul, trouble him so strangely, that he arose, scarce aware of his action, and turned the glass of the mirror to the wall. His horrid lethargy thus broken up, Daniel unlocked a secret drawer, and deposited the handkerchief in it ; " It is too precious to be carried about me, and may be lost," he muttered ; and then he left his chamber, and went down-stairs, turning into the supper-room.

His mother and father, Mr. Donovan and Helen, only appeared as he entered. Hugh sat alone at the upper end of the deserted board, drinking the last bottle of wine it afforded him : Mrs. D'Arcy and her elder guest were listening to Helen reading a book. No one took notice of him as he came in. It

had been resolved to make him suffer for his rude conduct during the evening.

" Maybe my absence would be better than my company, here, genteels," he said, after he had stood some time in the middle of the floor. The literary party did not seem to hear him : Helen read on ; his father alone vouchsafed to give him a look, but it was an angry and a scornful one.

" Well, then, I'll be going," resumed Daniel, replying to the more expressive silence ;—" Who knows but Marks would take pity on me, and discourse me—where is he, father dear?"

" Come here, and I'll tell you," answered Hugh, commanding him to his side by an ungracious gesture ; " he's just where he ought to be," as soon as Daniel came near ; " walking out in the beautiful moonshine with *your Dora Donovan*."

" Thankee, father, and sure I wish 'em both a pleasant walk of it—which way did they say they'd go?"

" If you want to know, I'll tell you—along the hill, over the river, by the high path :" and Daniel once more expressed his thanks for this information, and bowing round to every one, as well as he could, left the apartment.

" The poor creature is in his right senses, again," said his father, after he had retired ; " and we oughtn't to keep up malice against him."

" I agree," said Mr. Donovan ; " and now, indeed, would be the time to sooth him."

" Let us call him back, Madam D'Arcy," continued Hugh, while tears (half wine-drops) gathered in his eyes.

" Pray do not so," remonstrated Mrs. D'Arcy : " I admit he has curbed his guilty humour ; but as he now goes to meet Marks and Dora, their company, and the fine night, will do him more good than ours ;" and the lady, as usual, had her way.

Meantime, in a very different state of mind and heart from that attributed to him by any of his sagacious friends, Daniel paused an instant outside the door he had closed carefully and gently after him, and knitting together every muscle of his frame, until he shook in a momentary convulsion, seized the hair of his head with both his hands, and tore it up by the roots. His treatment by the party within, although a provocation distinct from the matter which really possessed him, had begun to change the deep and steady horror of his soul into renewed phrensy : and the picture of Marks and Dora sauntering, arm-in-arm, along the hill-path, " in the beautiful moonlight," arose before his imagination with an influence which nearly urged him to cast himself upon the tiled hall, shouting like a madman.

A settled purpose, however, even still enabled him to keep himself from any such untimely outbreak. In a short time, he crossed into the room out of which he and his friends had issued to supper ; laid his hand on something, while his fearful eyes wandered all around the apartment ; hid it under the buttoned front of his coat, and then, the second time that night, Daniel left his father's house.

CHAPTER VII.

ABOUT the hour when he issued forth, a great commotion happened in the residence of Attorney Doolly, in the neighbouring town, which, as it, and particularly the circumstances that followed it, much concerned Daniel, shall here be noticed.

The attorney's second wife, who has already been introduced in the opening chapters of this tale, was considerably his senior ; and, recollecting the order of her mind, it followed almost essentially, that, from the day of her nuptials, she permitted herself to entertain suspicions of the probability of his continuing faithful to the tender vows interchanged between them. Many other reflections heightened this sentiment. She knew she had just as few claims to beauty, or even to interest of person, as she had to youth ; and her spouse was not famed for indifference on either point. Her common sense, if not her humility, farther would suggest to her, that "the 'torney," though not born or, in early life, bred a gentleman, had, notwithstanding, acquired much respectability of presence and manner, during the last fifteen years of his intercourse with the world : while she remained, "to this blessed hour," exactly the same broad-spoken, primitive, red-faced, lumpish person, who had been called Judy Rafferty for thirty years and upwards, behind her little crazy counter, in her little huxter's shop, at the corner of Back-lane, "nigh-hand to the turnin' up to the main-street." Hence the good woman sometimes experienced a painful misgiving of her husband's feeling of respect towards her, nay, of her own success in endeavouring to uphold his dignity, in the character of a wife. True, during their courtship, no living man could have promised better or fairer than

'Torney Doolly did promise ; no man could profess a purer love, and in all words and actions, give proof of its sincerity ; or, when Judy hinted to him, shrewdly and cautiously, her fears that, "by rason of her want of the quality-breedin', and the book-larnin', she mightn't turn out to be a fit wife for a jintleman 'torney ;"—no man could have more amiably remarked how slight were his claims to expect a partner "from among the grandees of the land," and how infinitely he prized the virtues of the heart, together with that certain stock of sound worldly sense which his darling Judy was known to possess, to all the airs and graces of high breeding and family pride. This was very true ; still, since their marriage, Judy had been forming her own notions on the subject : until at last, as she now and then sat alone in her chamber, perhaps after getting some very substantial cause to doubt, her thoughts began to arrange themselves in something of the following shape :—
" Well, Micky ; God reward you for all ! but if I took time to consider, in them days when you used to come a coortin' me, asther dusk, into the little place at the back o' the poor old shop, you wouldn't have my hard-earned thousands in your own hands, a' me at your marcy, this blessed day, any how."

But Mrs. Doolly's chief jealousy of her fine-gentleman husband was strictly personal, or, perhaps, all other doubts and fears rushed to find vent at that opening. This was proved by the fact of her discharging, successively, and very quickly after each other, maid-servants of her household, whose comeliness, whether of face or person, aroused her dislike from the moment they had crossed her threshold, as also by her persevering endeavours to procure in their stead the ugliest possible women, or the oldest, "if they weren't out-an'-out past their workin' days," for the service of her and her husband.

How Jinny Haggerty became an inmate of her house, under these circumstances, may well be wondered at : but, in fact, she had been smuggled into it. Notwithstanding Marks D'Arcy's favourable opinions of the respectable attorney, let no one start at hearing it insinuated that, in consequence of a previous acquaintance with Jinny, Doolly himself had contrived a plot for the purpose, aided and abetted by the girl's brother, and by the girl's self, to boot. As soon as the Haggerties—acting, by the way, under the attorney's instructions—had promptly obeyed Hugh D'Arcy's wrathful and but half-intended order to quit his grounds,—an affecting story of the distress of the whole poor family appealed to Mrs. Doolly's heart, and while Dinnis was named as elected to a vacant place of domestic

servitude, with a reservation in his favour (when he should acquire the art of writing a better hand) of a clerkship at the professional desk in the office, "the little child," his sister, a poor half-starved, ill-clad, ill-favoured creature, whose very appearance (though how could she help that?) deprived her of friends in the world, became thrown upon the charitable consideration so the really good-natured woman, and after passing a hasty examination in the dusk of the evening, in the back-parlour, (being farther assisted by an unwashed-face, clumsy and mean attire, and her well-conned affectation of a sneaking, insignificant manner, and a confirmed stupidity of mind), went down to the kitchen as the hired servant of Mrs. Doolly; a written engagement, for the term of two years, drawn up by the attorney, and bearing his wife's mark, safe in her pocket.

Her mistress even followed her, in order to recommend a decent attention to personal cleanliness and neatness, which, with the slightest possible change of manner, Jinny promised to observe. Next morning, Mrs. Doolly only noticed that her new servant must be many years older than had been represented, and, now that her face was washed, and a plain new gown put on, was not very ugly, either. Some time after, she found out, that the girl's figure, at least, began to improve into real beauty, her stupidity into a very puzzling quickness, and her manner into a still more amazing self-command and importance. To end this matter; day after day, poor Mrs. Doolly could not help entertaining suspicions, if not conclusions, of a kind more detrimental to her domestic peace; until, upon the evening when it is necessary—(and it will be found so)—to visit 'Torney Doolly's house, she made up her mind to believe that, owing to the now finely-dressed and saucy Jinny Haggerty, she was a wronged and despised woman.

The attorney is seated in his front parlour, alone, finishing his bottle of claret; Dinnis Haggerty is writing in the office, a room off the parlour, and entered from it by a glass-door, shaded with some kind of green gauze.'

"Dinnis," called Doolly; and Dinnis accordingly appeared, one pen in his hand, and another stuck behind his ear. He stood in a very deferential attitude at the open glass-door.

"I think you may as well vote yourself a holyday, Dinnis," continued his master, "and lock up the office, particularly the small door leading into the hall, and then step in here."

Dinnis bowed, as his patron had taught him to do—indeed, owing to Mr. Doolly's instructions on different points, he had lately been improving rapidly, in manners as well as mind; and

then he withdrew to obey the commands he had received, and soon reappeared in the parlour.

"Is that the key of the small side-door of the office ?" asked Doolly, as his clerk laid one on the table, near his hand. Dinnis said it was. "You had better lock the glass-door, too ;" and this direction was also complied with.

"Now you may draw a chair to the corner of the table, and sit down, and take one glass of wine," resumed Doolly ; "for you will observe, Dinny, that, since you became my writing clerk, we are nearer upon a footing than we used to be."

"Thanks to you, master," said Dinnis, "and I know who I am always bound to pray for, in regard o' that, as well as other things."

"Pray for, Dinny ? never mind praying for *me*, till you first get the Pope taken out o' you."

Dinny laughed, modestly and approvingly, holding down his head, and eyeing the wine in his glass.

"You know, moreover, that we have some conversation—interrupted by Mistress Doolly, last night, and business, all day, —to go on with." Dinnis discarded his laugh for a face of grave earnestness, as he assented.

"To say nothing of your reporting your new adventure of a few hours ago." Again Dinny agreed, but a cold smile now crept round the corners of his liny lips.

"And so, Dinny, to begin—you seem to think that it was the vision of Gray-mantle at the door that killed the old concealed Jesuit, and cheated you and your old crony, bumbailiff Hicks, of the discovery money ?"

"Never a doubt of it, masther ; bad speed to his ould spirit, whatever road it's gone, that couldn't stop taking a simple boy, like myself, for the father o' mischief, wid his horns hid under his Spanish hat !"

"Neither would the girl believe in your flesh and blood, at your second appearance, Dinny ?"

"I'm afeard not, sir,—though, to the best of my knowledge, she thought I *was* the body you and I wanted her to believe in, the first night, in the wood."

"And what makes you suppose that she is not still of a like opinion ?"

"The free and easy way she takes to the real man, since he came among them, this evening ; I saw her and him out walking, arm-in-arm, afore I left D'Arcy's grounds, an hour or two agone ; and sure if she still was of a mind that the same body met her in the wood, and tould her them frightful stories, and

afterward talked to her about Masther Dan, at the dour of the ould priest's lodgin', she'd run far enough away from him, instead of going out to whisper him, alone, in the night-time,—ay—and the first night of their coming known to one another."

"Um—not if she happens to like him better, at first sight, than this lump of a brother, after all that has passed between them."

"I don't believe she does, masther."

"Then, there's worse news for yourself, Dinny, than for me."

"Why, yes, sir, to be sure ; if we can't manage to take her out of Masther Dan's hands another way."

"Running off with her, for yourself, in his name, Dinny, my boy?"

"Or a thing of the kind, sir."

"Does Dan know what you'd advise him to, as a friend, yet?"

"Hardly, Masther : I threw it out the night before the stranger arrived, but drew it back again, when I saw that he boggled at it, and maybe was going to get cross with me, moreover ; sure if he comes to look for me here to-night, and we hope he will, late as it is—or at a later hour, for that matter—he'll be in a better humour to hear rason :—Masther—as sartin as we sit here, Jinny saw the hilt of Mark's sword peeping out from under his coat, before she ran home from watching him, the last minute or so, Masther dear."

"Well, Dinny, I wish you all luck with the old grandee's daughter ; she's a girl that does your taste much credit : but surely you don't mean to make me believe that you are ready to try so much for her, just out of love, and nothing else ?"

"I'd like to win and wear her, the white pet, out of goodwill to Masther Dan, and the rest o' the family that I owe so much to, sir,—I'll never deny it."

"Ay, Dinny—and not out of great hatred to the little trifles her father can give her, when he *must* give it, to bribe you to make her 'an honest woman'?"

"Faiks, maybe not, sir," grinned Dinnis.

"I'm sorry, though, Dinnis, that she has changed her thoughts so soon about who was the person that spoke to her in the wood : surely the make and colour of the riding cloak and the Spanish hat agree to a tittle with what I sent you from Dublin, after seeing him in the streets there ; I got them made as much alike as was possible : and, upon his appearance at D'Arcy's home to-night, she must have noticed the likeness."

"She didn't, though, Masther, take my word ; the suspicion gone clean out of her head."

"You and he are of a height, too."

"To an inch, sir ; but that's little help, either."

"Dinnis, I shall begin to suspect that you have played your part, or spoken your speeches badly ; though, as you are a smart lad, that could hardly have happened, after all the drillings and rehearsals we had together."

"And you spake true, sir, it couldn't : I repeated every word you set down for me, and put the same sound of the voice to every word, as well, or better, than when you heard me, for the last time, and said it would do ; and then, if I didn't bould my head up, and stalk, here and there—but very little of that—as fine as e'er a grandee of 'em all—my name is Marks D'Arcy."

"But did you remember to forewarn her, in order to account for any of your old language and tones which remained, after all your endeavours, that you were trying to discourse unlike yourself—that is, unlike the person you wished her to suspect you were?"

"Indeed, and I did, sir : sure I couldn't forget ; it was the thing you dwelt on most to me."

"Well ; we must only try to work without getting her into love—or into something as useful for us as love—with Master Marks, Dinny, which circumstance her continuing of the same mind regarding her friend in the wood must have assisted, perhaps, effected."

"Sure, Masther, and we *can* work as well without it. Dan believes every word Jinny and I tould him."

"The handkerchief," interrupted the attorney,—"you gave him that, to-night?"

"B'lieve it, sir ! But, Misther 'Torney Doolly, dear," again indulging in a grin, "might I make bould to ask how it came into your hands?"

"Surely, I've tould you, Dinny ; he dropped it in the Diligence, while we travelled down from Dublin—such friends!—together."

"Och, ay !" laughed Dinnis ; "well, Masther, you bate Ireland for putting things together."

"Pho ! Dinny, my boy, the little trick deserves no such praise : we had been on the watch for exactly such little tokens, ever since we heard he was landed safe in Dublin, you know ; and, of a surety, a child, in my place, would have contrived to pocket the handkerchief, the moment it dropped among the straw under our feet."

"Well, sir ; Dan, as I was a saying, swallows every thing, good, bad, and indifferent ; and," lowering his voice, "if he only gives back the small-soord to the right owner, to-night—(and what else 'ud he button it under his coat for?)—if he only gives it back, the right way, you're in for seeing out your own little liking for the D'Arcy's, by a short cut, Masther."

"I wish, Dinny, you would quite put out of your head that *I* have any cause of quarrel with the family, or, as you hint, in your own way, want any revenge against them."

"Did I say the like, Masther, dear?" asked Dinnis, in simple earnestness ; "sure, if I did, this time, I mistook myself entirely, and the truth of the matter, more betoken ;"—in uttering these last words, Dinnis most deliberately lied ; he knew well, in common with the whole neighbourhood, that 'torney Dooly, although, since his change in life, he had never alluded to the circumstance, treasured up in his inmost breast an eternal and undiminishable revenge to the D'Arcys, on account of his disgraceful departure from their house, when he was a boy. But at present, it was Dinny's interest to flatter the profound dissimulation of his patron, as he has just been heard to do ; not that he hoped, however, to get credit for sincerity from the attorney : nor did even the attorney himself believe that Dinnis would not suspect that *he* suspected his candour ; but, so long as both avoided open opinions, each upon the other's motives, the ends of their present alliance were answered.

"Only, all for me, and for my good, sir, every step you take, and every word between us," continued Dinnis ; "God bless you, for the same, Masther, and mark you wid his grace!"

"And give me a long life, a happy death, and a favourable judgment—goes it not so, Dinny, among the old people?" Dooly scoffed, but his face showed that his heart was not at ease under the deep and blasphemous hypocrisy of Dinnis's prayer.

"But what do you mean by talking of a *short cut*, Dinnis?" he continued.

"Why, sir, nothing but this ; when one body has the misfortune of sending another body out of the world, in the middle of his sins—Lord save us!—it's law to take the life from the other body, in return, I believe : and so, there's always two gone, clane."

"You are a promising lad, Dinny : I did not think of that ; but before I praise you to the skies, let me hear what use you can make of it, regarding the business in hand."

"Musha, and I'll try, sir, to please you. If my poor oald masther, Hugh D'Arcy, that I love so much, had no sons, the present time, to take it into their heads to go to church, and so keep their father's acres in their own hands,—(an unlikely thing enough, only till there's a chance of it, as long as the life is in the both)—why, sir, where would be the demur in that case to any loyal jintleman, larned in the law, discovering on Hugh's bad, Papist title, and being rewarded with a good picking off his farums, if the whole o' them didn't happen to fall to his share? And sure I make bould to think that *there* 'ud be a short cut for you, masther, as I said before."

"Ay, Dinny, instead of trying to coax Masther Dan inside the church-door, that he may thereby turn out his brother and the ould people at the first going off, and then straining a statute point to blemish his own title, in the long run."

"Faix, and that's it, sure enough, masther."

"Then I wish we knew whether or not we are to be saved trouble, to-night, Dinnis?"

"We'll soon know, sir; before the daybreak, any how."

"How are you so sure he will come to you, here?"

"Because, whatever he does, he'll want me, sir: more betoken, he asked me is it here, in your house, I could be found, in case o' need."

"Supposing him arrived, then, Dinny, do you think he will appear armed?"

"Only with his brother's small-sword, I'll be bound to say, sir."

"Well: and, if it should be necessary, from any thing he may confess to you, to take it out of his hand, and secure him, would you venture to do so without help?"

"I ought to be stronger than Masther Dan, sir, to be sure—but I'd rather you'd just come in to us, at a signal, and let us do our best together."

"No, Dinny; I must not interfere till he is a prisoner—'twould look like an understanding between us:—but since you are not sure of yourself, alone with him, I'll call up a friend, while he and you are talking, and so it can be managed:—whisht, now! what's the matter above stairs?"

"The mistress *ballaragging** poor Jinny, once again, sir," answered Dinnis, after both had listened to Mrs. Doolly's voice ringing through the house in recrimination and anger, and Jimmy Haggerty's saucy shrill tones answering her. Presently heavy

* Abusing.

steps came down the stairs, and the enraged dame flung open the parlour-door, and entered.

" You 're found out, in arnest, 'Torney Dooly !' " she began — " little I said to you, while I only 'spected :—but Molly, the other girl, is asther giving me the proof at last—and now I come afore you, to bid you have that brazen hussy turned from my dour, this blessed minute, by your own hand, since she won't stir a step for me !"

Her husband, perfectly unruffled, and with an air of innocent equanimity, protested he did not understand her. More minute allusions were made by his afflicted wife, and he met them with mild and firm assurances that Molly could have but imposed on her. Mrs. Dooly gave no credit to his self-vindication, but continued to insist on having Jinny Haggerty thrust out of the house that moment. He could not do so, he owned, even were the girl guilty: such a proceeding would be illegal, at that unseasonable hour, past twelve o'clock; if Mrs. Dooly would only wait till morning, the whole matter should meet an investigation fully satisfactory to her feelings, in every way, and, he would take care, to his own also. No! Mrs. Dooly would not wait an hour—a moment! Was she prepared then to pay her unoffending servant full two years' wages, from the day she had been hired, according to written agreement? This fired Mrs. Dooly more and more, by appealing to her love of money, and she protested against any such arrangement—would not hear of it—only, if Jinny Haggerty did not quit her roof before many more minutes elapsed, she herself would quit it.

" Do, then, Mistress Dooly," said her husband, " and see if you will find it as easy to get back ;" and with an expressive smile, he winked aside to Dinnis. Mrs. Dooly caught both his smile and his wink, unobserved by him, however; and, as afterward appeared, they made a great impression on her mind, and led her into a very important course of conduct. For the present, her vehemence appeared suddenly checked, she cast her eyes on the floor, in a reflective mood, and thus replied to her husband's last words: " Well, Micky, dear: I don't like to vex you, entirely, an' so we 'll wait till the mornin', accordin' as you advise: an' sure, the joy o' my heart it will be if you can clear yourself; now, the good night."

" Good night, Mistress Dooly: and you had better go to bed, and try if a little sleep wouldn't do you good."

" I will, indeed, Micky, dear;" she withdrew.

Dinnis was about to say something in a low voice, almost as soon as she had gone out; but his patron held up his finger to

enjoin silence, motioning towards the parlour-door. They sat for some time without exchanging a word; then the attorney desired him to "steal out," and watch about the house till he could assure himself that his mistress was a-bed, and meantime send in Jinny to hear something of importance, which he, the attorney, had to communicate to her.

The faithful writing-clerk promptly obeyed these orders. When he returned to the parlour, his sister Jinny was newly-seating herself in a chair at the corner of the table, opposite to that occupied by her master.

"We have been chatting on the old point, Dinny, lad," observed Dooly; "and I am determined, with your help, to take a first step towards sending Judy Rafferty home to her huxter's shop, instead of explaining every thing to her great satisfaction, the first thing after daybreak."

"Poor Judy!" smiled Jinny, while Dinnis kept a grave face, and only professed himself ready to do all in his power, at the command of his master.

"Our witnesses for the Court of Conscience are quite ready?" pursued Dooly.

"And willing, sir," answered Dinny, now hazarding a knowing smile.

"My poor old woman! how she will look when she hears herself charged with matrimonial inconstancy!—ay, and when she finds *herself* found guilty of it by the little archdeacon, and sentenced to a divorce from her own faithful and much-wronged husband, and dependent upon him for a separate maintenance in future, out of her own produce of soap, red herrings, salt butter, halfpenny candles, cheese, chalk, and rusty bacon—eh, Jinny?"

"The poor creature! it's myself that pities her," again sneered Miss Haggerty.

"And then, Dinny, there's a friend of yours, not sitting far off from you at present, will stand before the parson, and his book open, in church, along with another friend of yours, I'm thinking."

"God bless you, 'Torney Dooly! sure Jinny and I are bound in duty to you for ever," said Dinnis looking modestly on the floor, while his flattered sister lavished upon her admirer glances such as were meant to combine, in one pretty expression, gratitude, archness, fondness, and bashfulness. The secret thought of her mind, however, at that very moment, was—"Yes, I'd like to be Mistress 'Torney Dooly, but after it, you ugly Christian! there's a boy of my own I won't give up

for you, any way." And since Jinny's mental reservation is thus exposed, so may be the honest attorney's :—"A brace of audacious fools ye both are! No, no, Masther Dinny Haggerty bring up your men well prepared, to rid me of my own poor Jude, and after that, see if I shall be in a hurry to put your saucy sister in her place :—how *can* the hussy expect it, and I already growing tired of her?—what has she to offer me —what bribe?—But hush, and listen!" he continued, addressing them in a whisper—"Dinny, isn't that like a noise in the office?"

Dinny had heard nothing, but Jinny agreed that she thought Mr. Doolly right.

"And just as we began to converse awhile ago, it struck me I heard something like the sound of the side door that opens to the hall turning on its hinges," continued the attorney.

"It can't be, sir," observed Dinny; "sure there's the key at your hand."

"You could not have missed locking it? Come, let us see —but hist again!"

"That's the noise you heard, Masther, at the windows in the next room, and now it's come nearer to us." Dinny rose up much agitated, as some one in the street pulled at the shutters of the parlour windows, which were bolted on the inside, trying to force them open.

"It's Masther Dan D'Arcy," he continued, his eyes fixing with a deep and powerful expression on Doolly's; and the same kind of look was interchanged successively between the three listeners, while their cheeks grew pale.

"Come, then, Jinny," said the attorney, taking her hand; "your brother must receive his old friend alone. Dinny, my lad, let him in at the window, as he seems to prefer it: I may avoid future remarks by such a course—his visit is to you—and the master of a house always has charge of the key of his own hall-door past midnight—you understand me.—Come, Jinny."

"Masther!" Dinny trod stealthily after him to the parlour-door, and whispered in his ear—"Don't forget to call up the friend you spoke of."

"Never fear, Dinny; and do you mind your points, which ever way the thing goes." He passed his arm round Jinny Haggerty's neck, and led her out.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE instant Dinnis was left alone, he went to the cupboard of a corner sideboard, took out a bottle of wine, drank off a cup-full, examined the priming of a pistol which he drew from his pocket, put up the weapon carefully, and, while his eyes unconsciously fixed on the ceiling of the apartment, this was his thought—"Well, I wonder is Marks D'Arcy dreaming pleasant dreams, this blessed hour o' the clock, in his innocent sleep under his mother's roof, or is his handsome body lying stretched, could and stiff, somewhere by the river's side—the spirit gone out of it, and now seeing and knowing every thing we want to do?"

The noise at the window had ceased, so as to allow him time for acting and thinking to such an extent; but Dinnis had scarce proposed to himself the question here recorded, when it was resumed with great violence; and now, stealing on tiptoe to the window, he cautiously raised the sash, and through the chinks of the still unbarred shutters asked, "Who is there?"

"Let me in, in the duoul's name!" answered Daniel D'Arcy; "who can it be but me? and what do you mean by keeping me here so long?" While he spoke, the shutters were unbarred and flung open, and he jumped into the room, his face terribly haggard, and his eyes rolling.

"Is this wine?" he resumed, seizing the bottle which Dinnis had just taken out of the cupboard and placed on the table; and then, without waiting for an answer, he put it to his lips, and drained it at a draught. The next instant he flung himself into a chair. Dinnis Haggerty observed that it was his left hand he used in catching up the bottle, his right being thrust into the breast of his coat, as if it held something tight. Dinnis made another observation: his left hand was bloody.

They sat opposite to each other for some time, without speaking another word. Daniel's head had dropped on his breast, his legs were stretched out, and his right hand still continued hidden, thrust in between some open buttons of his coat. Dinny remained upright on his chair, his palms and fingers holding his knees, and his looks riveted on his visiter.

"Is it hurted your hand is, Masther Daniel?" at last questioned Dinnis.

Daniel held up the hand before his own eyes, and after regarding it, answered, "Yes I suppose so :" then he shook it once or twice, and rubbed it awkwardly, perhaps unconsciously, among the folds of his abundant skirts.

"A fall you got, sir?" pursued Dinnis.

"No," was Daniel's only reply ; and they were again silent for some minutes.

"Maybe the other hand is hurted, too, Masther Dan, and that's why you're hiding it in your buzzom?"

"Not that I know of—see."—He drew out his right hand. It was closed tightly upon the haft of a small sword. The instant it caught his eye, he jumped up, glaring on the fragment of the weapon, and cried—"Curses! Hell and furies! what keeps this between my fingers?" and as he spoke, he dashed it against the floor.

An extraordinary sensation arose within Dinnis Haggerty, and with such strength that it made his head giddy. It was partly gratified revenge and fiendish exultation, partly horror at his own certainty, and, in spite of himself, partly pity, as his mind rapidly recurred to the picture it had before drawn of the young, the handsome, the kind-hearted, the spirited Marks D'Arcy lying dead in the silent moonlight, "somewhere by the river's side,"—and dead by the hands of his own and only brother.

When this sickening feeling partially subsided, Dinnis's thought was to call in the friend promised to be held in readiness, and at once seize and secure the presumed murderer who stood before him. Something that Daniel said, however, checked the execution of his purpose.

"Dinny Haggerty, though we left the Cross-Keys very hearty,* the other night, I well remember every word you spoke to me there."

"To be sure you do, Masther Dan—and why not? Neither of us was so far gone at the time, as to be deprived of our senses, any how."

"And, Dinny, I came here to-night to tell you, that I am ready and willing to do all you wanted me to do, that time."

"Well, sir; and it's I that am glad your mind is made up to take your own part," answered Dinnis, now much at fault.

"Thanks, Dinny; you are my best friend," Daniel smiled

* Tipsy.

hideously as he strode about the room, and Dinnis was still more put out.

"First and foremost, then, I'm ready to go to the church, as early as they'll open it for me, after the daylight, and read my elegant recantation."

Dinnis strove to collect his own thoughts before he replied: "Ay, Masther Dan, and make 'em all march out of the ould house over the hill, in no time, asther?"

"To be sure—to be sure—if they don't give me my own way with that girl, at a word."

"My blessing on your notion, sir!"

"And then, Dinny, my man, we'll have her, at any rate, the way you once gave me the wind of a word about—you remember?"

"'Twas in the wood?" asked Dinnis.

"In the wood; ay, Dinny, and quick work we'll make of it, altogether. She is to be on the road to her own house in a few hours, and you, and ten or twelve boys to help you, can just meet her, and borrow her from her ould dad, for me, the very time I'll be making a good Christian of myself, in the beautiful church: and mind me, Dinny, I'm to find her well guarded, in the Red-House, when I ride back; for as soon as they turn me into a true Protestan', some of them will lend me a horse, surely, for love or money, to let me gallop over the road, in style, like any gentleman; and she and I can have our own time of it, Dinny, for a day or two; and then she may go home to the grandee, Donovan, crying for a husband;" he laughed.

"I'll work the world, to do it for you, Masther Dan." Dinnis went on to think as follows; "Yes; we must let him have his liberty till the colleen is nabbed, in *his* name, but not put up in the Red-House, though maybe in a safer place."

"He may give her to Masther-Den-Bashaw-Cocklosty, if he likes, *then*," resumed Daniel.

"Who do you mean, sir?" asked Dinnis.

"Why, who can I mean, sir, but one whose name I'll never speak while I draw breath? and whose name you must never speak to my face at your peril—and I said so, afore."

"But I thought, Masther Dan," began Dinnis, and he stopped short in misgiving and confusion.

"Thought what?" demanded Daniel, turning quickly upon him, and standing still.

"Tell me, sir,—isn't—wasn't—that little thing on the flure the hilt of his soord?"

"It is the hilt of his sword—well?"

"Why, then, Master Dan, dear, sure myself thought—and seeing your hand, and all, and the way you bounced into this room,—thought, that something or other had happened tonight."

"Ay, Dinny?" Daniel advanced slowly to him, his brows bent, and his eyes darting their glances into those of his counsellor—"And what, besides, made you think that?"

"Nothing—nothing, indeed, sir," stepping back towards the door.

"Stand still, man, and listen to me! I don't want to hurt you;—why should you think it? and yet you look as if you did. Dinnis Haggerty, I only want to learn one thing: did you, or did you not, suspect me *before* I jumped into this room; and, with that thought on your mind, did you sit here and leave me to follow my own fancy? If you did, Dinnis, I must call you a bad friend, and a bad fellow, and find out some one else to give me good advice for the future; that's all."

This straight-forward and impolitic speech defeated its own aim. It taught Dinnis that, whatever might have happened, he must clear up Daniel's new doubt of him, in order to secure the intercourse, though but one of a few hours, which was indispensable to cloak his designs upon Dora Donovan: and, accordingly, in the most emphatic manner, he protested that a suspicion, such as Daniel hinted at, had never entered his mind until he saw the hilt of the sword; and that if it had, he would have hunted Daniel over the face of the earth to keep his hand from doing what his heart must break at the thought of.

"Well, Dinny, I believe you; so, now let us speed on with our business," resumed Daniel.

"Yes, sir, to be sure,—what's become of the rest of it, I wondher?" he inquired suddenly, in a low voice, as again he pointed to the floor.

"I broke it into a thousand pieces, on a stone," replied Daniel, speaking deliberately, yet vehemently, through his shut teeth.

"You did, sir?"

"And scratched my hand, I suppose without knowing it, or feeling it, at the same time," continued Daniel, in a freer voice, as he turned to resume his striding walk about the room, with an air, which seemed to decline farther words on the subject.

"God be praised, sir!"

"Why, God be praised, Dinnis Haggerty?"

"That it was your own blood I saw on your hand, the blessed night, Masther Dan, *ma-chree!*"

"It *was* my own!" cried Daniel, breaking out; "It *was*! and black as the hatred of my heart and soul is to him, this night—and black as is the revenge I owe him, and will wrike on him—on him, and on all his abettors—ay, though I bind myself for it to the stake, among the flames, here, and in the world to come!—still, still, Dinnis Haggerty, I *can* say, and I do say, with you, praise be to God that it *was*!"

Hitherto, Daniel had worn his hat in the room; now he took it off, and stood uncovered for a moment, his eyes cast upward, and his lips moving.

"Not that I mean to deny," he resumed, again facing his friend; "not that I mean to deny, my good Dinny, that you were right in your first thought—very nearly right—any how.—Dinny, with a mind as mad as the devil could make it, I *did* run out to cross their path—his own sword upon me—and at a place I knew they must pass close to, I *did* lie down to watch and wait for them. You remember the spot. 'Tis on the very top of the hill, over the river, where the furze and the briars are high and thick, and the narrow path cut through the knock. And oh, Dinny, had they come within reach of my hand, when I first flung myself there, I fear—I fear—I know, I know!—what would—what must have happened!" He paused, to give way and escape to the shudder which ran through his frame.

"And they didn't, Masther Dan?"

"No—but had walked so far along the hill, that, for a good hour, and more, I could catch no sound of their footsteps, coming back. And by degrees, Dinny, in the dead pause, I began to listen to the other sounds near me and all round me, and to fix my eyes on the clear night above me—the sky without a cloud, the young moon, the bright, winking stars;—the little dashing and running of the shallow river was heard like words, in my very heart—words of an ould familiar voice, bidding me be at rest; and the *shauneen black caps'* chirping, near the rushes, by the water, told me to love my brother, my mother's son, or at the least, not kill him;—and, Dinnis, all over my head, the beautiful moon, the wonderful stars for ever in their places, and for ever doing whatever is God's will they *are* doing, so far, far off, in peace, and quiet, and in uncommon glory, as thick, over the great sky, as sand on the seashore;—all this, Dinnis, changed my heart, I don't know how, until the tears amost came:—and then, as I turned on my side

among the bushes, the sword I had ready in my hand glistened, and I jumped up, Dinny, and struck it with my whole strength, against the stone I told you of, and stamped and jumped upon the bits it flew into, as you would do with some spiteful reptile that wanted to twist up against your face and heart, and sting you, Dinny—fearing it, and hating it, together!"

"The Lord save us, Masther Dan!" whispered Dinnis Haggerty, now neither in scoff nor in hypocrisy.

"And, Dinny, had they only kept out of my sight, after that, I think my hatred of him would not have come back as strong as it has come: but, just as I stamped my heel upon the last scrap of the sword I could fix my eye on, their footsteps and their voices were in my ears, and I threw myself among the furze and the briars, again. Then I saw them, a good way off, and my madness rose in me, a second time; and forgetting the haft of the blade, in my hand, sure I danced up, with a shout, and raced down the hill-path, on them."

"And spoke to him, sir?"

"Ay, Dinny, and more than that! I took him, this way, Dinny, dear;" he suddenly seized Haggerty by the arms, with all his strength; "And let her go!" I said, "let her go, you bad brother and deceitful friend! Let her go, you coxcomb, of the baby face—you poor puppet, tricked out with shinery and finery, for a mountebank's stage, at a fair—let her go, and, from this night, out, stay away from her side, or, by the mother that bore us both! you shall not break my heart, and hide me in an early grave, without sorely ruing it! Feel me!" I said Dinny, griping him tighter; and, Dinny, the long, weak gad couldn't move a finger, in my hands;—"feel me! you are the oulder brother and son, and the favourite, and your long neck makes you look a head over me,—but, feel me, I say—you are not able to stand against the strength I have in my bones!—try if you are!" and with that, Dinny, lad, I twisted him round, and flung him a good bit from me, where he fell; and so I left them—picking up, I believe, the haft I had dropped to leave my hands free—and running along the hill's-brow like a wind, *her* screeches and *his* words following me, for a time."

"God be good to us, again, sir! and, if he done nothing against you, what did he say?"

"Nothing—or something, like a coward, that I didn't listen to—no matter what. 'Tis all over, now, between us—all over, and for ever. I have laid hands on the grandee, the flower of the flock, the fireside pet, the scholar, and the pride of the fa-

gmy, and of course, they will never again let me darken their door, Dinny,—ay! if they can keep me out!—ay, if I will let them wait to send for the Minister, to-morrow—to-day, I ought to say—and forage for some ould priest, at the same time, and hurry on a wedding, to take Dora Donovan out of the way of Dan D'Arcy, the scapegrace, the outlaw, and the madman! But, we'll see, we'll see.—Dinny Haggerty, here I come, I tell you, once again, to get the law on my side against them all! —to turn Protestan', Dinny *a-hager*, and have every sod they're worth in my own hands, and they at my mercy!—show me how I am to go to work for this, first, Dinny. My Papist brother can have no right or title, that I know. But my Papist father;—won't his right stand, either?"

Dinny replied that, although Daniel might confidently trust to him in the affair of forcing off Dora from Mr. Donovan, he could not—(at the same time that he well knew every point of law was in Daniel's favour)—venture to lay down the details of the case, and supply instructions upon his own authority.

"Upon whose, then?" asked Daniel, staring: and he drew back, in instinctive abhorrence, as his counsellor mentioned the name of attorney Doolly. After a pause, however, he suddenly resolved, in obedience to a strange turn of his mind, to consult the man of law directly; asked if he was at hand; and when Dinny left the room to return with him—"To be sure," laughed Daniel, smiting his thigh, as he walked about—"to be sure, and why shouldn't I! Micky is Marks's friend, and why not good enough for me, after all my talk? ay,—and the best body in this living world, to do Marks the friendly turn we now want from him.—Come in, Misther 'torney Doolly—come in, Micky," he continued, as the proprietor of the house appeared, bowing respectfully, at his own parlour door; "I'm glad in the heart to see you, sir, here in your own fine house; it's many a year since I saw you in my poor one—mine that is to be, I mean, Micky, dear; so, shake hands;"—Daniel's greeting was of the roughest and most energetic kind—"and let us sit down, at once, and get the law-books on the table—for our friend Dinny has put you up to the thing, by this time, I dare say."

Daniel guessed aright. A few words in the next room from his writing-clerk had fully advised the attorney of the exact circumstances which he was called on to consider; and burning with rage at Daniel's taunts, and only suppressing his feelings by adding them to the red-hot heap of hatred and projected revenge that was accumulated in his breast, Micky Doolly bowed again, ordered Dinny to supply "the law-books," just as Da-

niel had bidden him, and entered forthwith upon the business of their meeting.

"The first passage of statute-law, Masther Daniel D'Arcy," he began, "which strongly relates to your present concerns, is as follows, in the words of the vote of the Commons House of high Parliament, in the reign of gracious Queen Anne, dated 17th of March, Anno Domini, 1705."

"What do you or they mean by *anno domini*?" asked Daniel, quite bent upon going through the matter in hand, in a watchful, intelligent way.

"The year of Our Lord—that is, so many years since the blessed birth of Our Blessed Intercessor," answered the attorney, religiously.

"Is that the same birth the Papists hold by?" again demanded Daniel, now superfluously, even though information on the abstract point might be presumed necessary.

"Of a surety, the same," answered Dooly, "in their blinded opinion, at the least."

"Well: read out of your book, Masther Attorney."

"The words of the vote are—'All magistrates, and other persons whatsoever, who neglect or omit to put the laws against Papists into execution, are betrayers of the liberty of the kingdom; and in the same year of 1705, although somewhat later, that is, in the month of June 1705,'" continued Mr. Dooly, "the same Parliament resolved, 'That the saying and hearing of mass, by persons who had not taken oath of abjuration, tended to advance the interest of the Pretender; and that such judges and magistrates'—(it is known to you, Masther Daniel, that, not considering my honourable calling of gentleman attorney, I have also the honour of holding his gracious Majesty's commission of the peace,)—'that such judges and magistrates as wilfully neglect to make diligent inquiry, and discover such wicked practices, ought to be looked upon as enemies to Government.'"

"Then I advise you to be guilty of no such neglect, Micky," observed Daniel.

"It behooves me, indeed, to take care that I shall not be, Masther Daniel D'Arcy: but, with regard to the opinion of still the same House of Parliament upon honourable persons in *your* present situation, sir, suffer me to read one other small passage—"The prosecuting and informing against Papists is an honourable service to the Government."

"To the what?" asked Daniel.

"To the Government, sir."

"Oh—an honourable service to—the Government. Well, and so it is. Go on."

"Thus much from my authentic reports of the Commons' journal, Master Daniel. We must now pass to even more important volumes. To approved laws of the land, upon which the foregoing notes were, as I may say, only comments. Give that book near you, Dinnis Haggerty."

"Give it to him, quick, Dinny," echoed Daniel, with unnecessary zeal.

"I opine, sir," resumed Doolly, turning over the leaves of the gigantic volume, "that you seek to recover any property, in the possession of any of the persons at present concerned, to which the law of the land entitles you, as a Protestant discoverer and loyalist?"

"Of a surety," assented Dan rapidly.

"First, then, as to the moneys obtained in foreign parts, by your honourable brother," continued Dolly, although hopeless of a clause to help him on.

"Curse and confound him and them!" exclaimed Daniel: we'll pass that matter: if he *has* riches, why they are his own earnings; or they are but huxter's scrapings, any how, Micky."

"As you please, sir; again the attorney concentrated the inward flashings of his anger into, as it were, a hot dense ball of decreed revenge, which deposited itself on the old heap;

"Here, however, I fine a clause of statute law, of which, assuredly, you may avail yourself:—By the thirteenth of his present reigning and most gracious Majesty, George the second, sixth clause, it is enacted, that Protestants educating their children as Papists, are made subject to the same disabilities as Papists are."

"And what have I to do with that?—my ould father is no Protestant," said Daniel.

"Your lady mother is, sir."

"Well? oh, I see: she has some trifle of pin-money, in her own right, and—but no, no, attorney Doolly; we won't meddle with that, either: tell me something else I can do by turning my coat?"

"I will Master Daniel. And first I would call your attention to the truth I am about to affirm. Supposing you, for a moment, to be an illegitimate son of your worshipful father and mother——"

"What, man!" interrupted Daniel fiercely.

"*Supposing*, I say—merely as an unfounded law case," remonstrated the attorney.

"As well founded as any of them, then," muttered Daniel, only half conciliated.

"That you are so situated, sir; again supposing you to conform to the legal religion of the land; in that case, merely as the sole Protestant child, without reference to your being the younger or the elder of another child, or of no matter how many other children, you would be heir-at-law to the estates and properties of your parents, granting them to hold such by the best title."

"But since I am *not* a bastard, what's the use of talking about that, 'torney Dooly?"

"It would, nevertheless, be a short way to our present object, Master Daniel, if, indeed, you choose to be guided by a standing enactment; for according to another law of the gracious sovereign who now reigns over us—the nineteenth of his reign, chapter the thirteenth,—all marriages between Protestants and Papists, or celebrated by Popish priests, are annulled, sir; and although some deliver that this law has effect only upon mock marriages, which have taken place after its enactment, yet are others, including my humble self, of opinion, that——"

"Now, may Heaven confound your base-born boldness, Micky Dooly!" interrupted Daniel, standing up. "What! make out my own mother *to be* a mother, without ever having married my father! and my own self—and my own brother—bad as he is to me, and well as I hate him, our father's and our mother's sons, in sin, and in shame, and in dishonesty!—And on whose word? on your's, and on the faith of that big, talky book, there? Tell me, attorney,—how can ye undo what has been done? most of all, what has been done with God for a witness, judging between heart and heart; and when people promise before a priest, in his name, though not of your choosing? and this *is* what you call the law of the land? and by such helps I am to have my revenge?—Micky—sweet as the thought of that revenge is to me, deadly as they have all wronged me, and trampled on me, and resolved as I am to make them all rue it, or, at the least, to get them into my power, and have them at my mercy; yet, Micky, you must find me out better law than that, or I will kick the law-books into your face,—go home, and kneel down to every one I meet there—and deprive you—you, yourself, of the pleasure

and glory of making a conformist, and a good son and brother of me!"

This unexpected burst of Daniel took some time to be cooled down, even assisted as the attorney was by the generous peace-making endeavours of Dinnis Haggerty. Daniel, however, did at last consent to resume his seat, and finally, there was abundance of "better law" found for him, quite away from the last-quoted clause.

The attorney read the third clause of an act of Anne, by which "a Popish father, though he may have acquired his estate by descent, from a long line of ancestors, *or by his own purchase,*" and Mr. Dooly laid an emphasis on the last words, "is deprived of the power, in case his eldest son, *or any other son,*" (an emphasis, again,) "becomes a Protestant, to sell, mortgage, or otherwise dispose of it, or to leave out of it any portions or legacies."

"That's the law!" cried Daniel, slapping the table—"all of them under my thumb, and the whole blame on my own head, without sin or disgrace to any one besides."

Dooly continued to say, "That he believed this clause quite sufficient to entitle Daniel, after reading his recantation, to take immediate possession of his father's house and acres: but there was still another legal provision, by virtue of which, having once become a legal believer, he might assuredly call on the sheriff to instal him in instant possession; and the man learned in the law, concluded by perusing the seventh clause of the act of Anne, dated 1704, by which all Papists are deprived of such "inheritance, devise, gift, remainder, or trust, of any lands, tenements, or hereditaments, of which any Protestant was or should be seized in fee-simple, absolute, or fee-tail, which, by the death of such Protestant, or his wife, ought to have descended to his son, or other issue, intail, being Papists," and makes them descend "to the nearest Protestant relation, as if the Popish heir, and other Popish relations, were dead."—"Pursuant to this enactment, Masther Daniel," commented the attorney, "your father never had a right to enjoy the bequest of his Protestant uncle, by which he purchased his present lands and holdings; and also, in support of the last-quoted clause, it enables you to dispossess him, as soon as you shall leave the church-door, a sound Protestant."

Daniel triumphantly concurred, and, with the day breaking in upon them through the crevices of the window-shutters, a plan of operations was quickly struck out. In a few hours, Mr. Dooly promised to go forth and arrange for the reception,

at the chief church of the town, of the new conformist ; and thence he covenanted to repair to the sheriff, his most assured friend, and provide, under his permission, a competent posse, civil and military, to accompany Daniel to dispossess his father, mother, and brother. Having so stipulated, Dooly retired. And then Daniel engaged Dinnis to exert himself, simultaneously with these good services of his master, in raising the gallant band who were to force Dora Donovan from the care of her present protector ; and his tried old friend of the wood made him happy with earnest assurances of zeal, success, and good faith. Finally, rejecting Haggerty's hospitable offer of a bed, and insisting upon being left alone, Daniel fell fast asleep in one of the attorney's easy-chairs, his head pillow'd upon the statute-books which were heaped on the table.

CHAPTER XIX.

DINNIS HAGGERTY was the first of Daniel's agents, (so, at least, Daniel thought,) who, punctual to his engagements, went out in the broad morning light to do him a service. Before Dinny left the house, however, his master and he had a few words of confidential discourse together. It struck both as probable, that Daniel, after half sleeping away the mingled excitements of wine and passion, might repent of his brave purposes : and to counteract such a misfortune, they resolved to supply a new stimulus to his feelings : " just as we hand the counsellors a refresher, Dinny," observed the attorney, " the second morning of a trial in court, to keep them kind to their work."

" Dinny dutifully grinned in approval of his patron's witty comparison, and sallied forth upon his own business. Mr. Dooly soon after entered the parlour. Dan was still asleep on the statutes. When his new ally gently and respectfully awoke him, it did indeed seem that much of his revengeful courage had flown ; and Dooly, thanking himself in his heart for his wise precautions, promptly set about rallying it back again. He proposed an early and hasty breakfast ; a kind of French one, crusts and a cup of wine ; and, while walking to his cupboard to get those materials, he remarked that, indeed, no time was to be lost, inasmuch that the whole town were

talking of nothing, early as was the hour, but the wedding about to take place, in a few hours, at the church.

"And who be they that are in such a hurry to get married, this morning, Mistrer Attorney?" asked Daniel.

"A daughter of Squire Donovan's, and your own honourable brother, Masther Daniel."

The experiment succeeded. The wine was gulped down by Daniel, and, arm-in-arm with his friend, Micky Dooly, he hurried off to be before his brother Marks in the church; not indeed in hopes of getting married there, instead of him, but of doing what would help to cloud Marks's honey-moon.

It has just been hinted that Daniel believed he had no earlier friend than Dinnis Haggerty stirring, that morning; and, indeed, the Attorney believed so, too; nay, Dinnis himself was of the same opinion; but they all mistook.

Two hours, or more, before the writing clerk quitted his master's abode, Mr. Mossop, the gentleman who had stood Daniel's friend against the anti-literary bailiff, but who had not so much obliged him by lending his carriage to Mr. Donovan, was startled from his sleep by a strange and unusual noise outside his house. There was a clattering, and a crashing, and a rumbling, all mixed together, to which the windows, nay, the walls of his solid mansion shook; and had an earthquake ever been heard of in his favoured island, the stout-hearted gentleman must have responsively trembled, of his own accord, as he lay, half awake, and listening, in his bed.

The horrid commotion increased every instant, and drew nearer, whatever it was. He suddenly sprang up, and, at the same moment having gained the front of his house, it as suddenly stopped. He was hastening to reconnoitre from a window, but a new noise fixed his feet to the spot; an assault, namely, upon the gigantic knocker of his hall-door, which so pealed and roared through the mansion, that his man-servants and his maid-servants, his house-dogs and his kennel-dogs, all awake in a body, though at different distances from each other, the former uttering frightened cries, or frantic shrieks, the latter barking in every variety of modulation, from the explosive yell of the mastiff, down to the pitiful effort of the lapdog.

Manning himself after this second fright, he soon threw up a front window, and having glanced downward, asked, in a loud and angry voice—"What does all this mean, ye scurvy pack! what is this enormous thing at my door?"

"It's the Fly-Dilly, your honour," answered a group of the usual attendants of that celebrated stage-coach, each trying to

bawl down the other—"it's the masther's Fly-Dilly, from the Cross-Keys."

"Is it? and what business has the accursed machine about my house, at such an hour, almost the middle of the night?"

Before they could answer, a woman's head well-wrapped in flannel, emerged from one of the open windows of the Diligence, and making a strange effort to turn itself upside-down, or downside-up, so as to bring its face under Mr. Mossop's observation, was heard to say—"Oh, sir, my dear crature, an' don't be angry wid the poor Dilly, or me, or any of us; we couldn't help it, sure, on a case o' life an' death."

"And who are you, madam, that are so ready with your excuses for this strange outrage?"

"I'm called the wife o' one 'Torney Doolly, your honour, my dear crature,—to my sorrow I say it; an' the most miserabilist o' the Lord's poor subjects, this holy an' blessed mornin', let alone that the lives of half the world, I believe, God have mercy on me! are in my hands, an' I losin' the time, talkin'!"

"You desire my assistance as a magistrate then? am I to understand you so?"

"Och, an' it's yourself that'll plase to do that same, your worship, Misther Mossop, my dear sowl."

"But how can you explain coming here in that vile old barrack of a thing? If you were so pressed for time, why not get their posting coach, at the Cross-Keys?"

Mrs. Doolly said "that the posting-coach, the only second vehicle of the establishment, had been out; and that it was a great mercy that they let her have the Diligence itself; nothing but a heavy bribe could prevail on them to suffer it to engage in extra work before its regular hour of leaving the town for Dublin; and then, only that it came home last night, and only that she was beforehand with it this morning, what must have she done?"

"Done, woman! could you not have run out to me? or walked? your very slowest pace would have outstripped its utmost endeavour, notwithstanding all the uproar it makes."

"Run! me run out to you, Misther Mossop, my darlin' crature, sir? ay, or walk it, either—three good miles o' ground, an' up hill, amost the whole o' the road? your honour, you never seen the shape it's the will o' God to gi' me, or you'd hardly say that, sir;—look at me now, an' I'll engage that you won't say it over again:" at these words the door of the vehicle being opened for her, Mrs. Doolly forced her low, clumsy, and very fat person out of the Fly Diligence, and as its followers

assisted her to set her feet on the ground, Mr. Mossop agreed in her last remark.

A servant, scarce recovered from the terror of heart in which he had awoke from his morning slumbers, was now ready to usher the good dame into Mr. Mossop's library ; and that gentleman, stopping his ears while the Diligence toiled down his avenue, retired to dress for his interview with Mrs. Doolly. He entered the library, anticipating, after all her fuss, only some rigmarole story of imaginary grievance. His proceedings, afterward, showed that he admitted himself to have been mistaken.

His servants heard his bell ring violently. When one of them answered it, the orders he received were to saddle a horse, and get out his carriage, also, immediately. Then he called for his confidential clerk, gave him a hasty whisper, and the man was galloping from the house a moment afterward. Before he passed through the hall, the butler pretended to have heard that the arrest of a certain girl, and "soldiers from the town,—back with her," were the commands issued. While Mr. Mossop impatiently awaits the return of his courier, to step with Mrs. Doolly, into his carriage, the scene may be changed to Hugh D'Arcy's house.

It is not meant that the occurrences now to be narrated, happened at Hugh D'Arcy's immediately after the departure of the man and horse from Mr. Mossop's ; on the contrary the messenger's commission must have been nearly executed before we fix our eyes on the front of the well-known mansion which is inhabited by our old friends. But, the moment we do so, Mr. Donovan appears hastening to the hall-door in grief and agitation.

Nancy opened it at his summons, weeping bitterly : "you have heard of this great misery ?" he asked.

"Oh, yes, sir—yes—almost as soon as you and Mistress Dora bid us good-bye, the mornin'."

"So soon, indeed ? how could that have happened ?"

"Och, *ma-vrone*, sir, an' sure you couldn't be past the avenny-gate when we hard the heavy fall on the boords above, shakin' the whole house, an' then the poor mistress's screech, that went through our hearts like a sword!"

"What do you mean, good Nancy ? am I not, indeed, the first messenger of affliction to this family ? has it run on before me, though in another shape ? The fall—the scream !—what has happened ?"

"Avoch, sir, and don't you know, yet ! sure I thought you

did, an' come back on the head of it! Oh, Misther Donovan, dear! the masther—the poor, kind-hearted ould masther!"

"Dead?"—Mr. Donovan momentarily forgot his own sorrows.

"No, sir—but worse! he's strtruck, sir, he's strtruck! an' though the eyes are wide open in his head—too wide open to give any body pleasure in lookin' at them—an' though he draws his breath, an' has the frightful kind of a smile on his poor, white, ould lips, sure he doesn't know one of us, Misther Donovan, honey, nor hear a word we say to him, I believe, let alone spakin' a word to us—avoch, sir, it's my mind he doesn't know whether his own self is livin' or dead, this moment!"

From Nancy's description, Mr. Donovan soon concluded that his old friend had suddenly been stricken with paralysis. It next occurred to him that the misfortune must have been caused by the effects of some distressing and agitating news of Daniel D'Arcy's conduct: "Perhaps," thought Mr. Donovan, "the unfortunate father has heard—although before the real occurrence—that it was in the wretched boy's name my child was to be forced from my side this morning;" and he went on to question Nancy on this point, disquising what had just occurred on his road homeward, but still seeking to ascertain the truth of his suspicion."

It relieved him, however, to collect from her answers, that the blow had fallen upon poor Hugh D'Arcy without any apparent or immediate provocation; that Daniel's second hasty departure from the house, the night before, had made no serious impression on his father, who retired to bed, laughing and jesting, soon after the occurrence; and that every one of the family believed Masther Dan to be safe and sound in the Red House, sleeping away his sulks and bad humour, that moment.

"Has Miss Donovan left her bed-chamber, yet?" continued the afflicted father. Nancy replied that she had not. "Then," he resolved, "I will turn away with my superfluous griefs from this house, try what I can, alone, to recover my poor, innocent Dora, and even her sister shall remain ignorant of the affliction, till I fail or succeed."

He was retiring from the hall-door, to take his way to the town, when Mrs. D'Arcy came down stairs, and in crossing the hall, saw him, and by a mute invitation, arrested his steps. The lady held up a handkerchief to her eyes, with one hand, and extended the other to her friend. It was an eloquent though silent claim for assistance and counsel in her sudden distress, to which he could not seem insensible. Mr. Donovan

led her into a parlour, resolving, however, that his stay in the house of mourning should be short, and also determined to save Mrs. D'Arcy, for the present, from the additional sorrow it was in his power to impart.

Daniel had seen him approach the hall-door, though from a distance. The lawn before the house was bounded at one side by a close row of trees, to which the neighbouring grounds fell in gentle undulations. Upon one of these little eminences Daniel stood, peeping at the mansion through the interstices of the trees. Hither he had hastened, after reading his recitation, to watch the occurrence of other expected events.

Though a summer's morning, it was a hazy, drizzling one; not a breath of air stirred the leaves, or moved the hazy clouds overhead, or made brisk the sleeping, sullen surface of the wide-spreading fields of wheat, oats, and barley. All was dull and sad around him. He thought, too, that he had never before seen so few living creatures, men or beasts, within view, or heard so few of the pleasant, familiar sounds of the open country. In the drowsy silence, the very chirp of the small birds, and the caw of the low-flying crow, struck on his ear as remarkably spiritless; as illustrations of solitariness, rather than as reliefs to it: and the air felt strangely raw, and seemed to impart similar peculiarities of sensation to his breast, even in the common act of breathing.

He had but just arrived on his watching post, by a circuitous rout from the town, and such were the first vague observations of his mind, without a single reference to other things: and he afterward thought this very strange, while he averred and knew it to be true. Mr. Donovan's approach to the house roused him from his unfeeling, or seemingly unfeeling apathy. Daniel was not too far distant not to notice, and understand, also, the agitation of his old friend. Dora had been ravished from her father, and was now in the power—"Ay," thought Daniel for the first time—"ay, and at the mercy of Dinnis Haggerty, the attorney's clerk." In the Red House? he continued to ask himself; and his impulse was to dart across the fields, and ascertain the fact. Two new observations held him stationary. Down a by-road, from a wild, hilly part of the adjacent country, his eye caught a carriage, apparently directing its course to the more open road which passed his father's avenue gate; and at the same moment Mrs. D'Arcy came to the open hall-door at which Mr. Donovan stood with Nancy, extending her hand, as has already been mentioned. The one circumstance was curious, and demanded a moment's consideration; but the other

more powerfully swayed his mind. Although he was not near enough to see his mother's tears, or discern the handkerchief at her face, still the general expression of her action and deportment struck him as that of one in great affliction. And why in great affliction? It could not be on account of Dora, for Mr. Donovan must be the first bearer of his own tale of grief to the door, and yet Mrs. D'Arcy met him, already affected by grief. Neither could any courier from the town have anticipated,—out-raced Daniel's own speed from the church to his present position, with the story of his having conformed in the view of dispossessing his father. In his heart he felt certain that Marks would hide from his mother all hints of their encounter on the hill the night before, and Dora's delicacy would not have allowed her to speak of it; what then was the matter, at home? He began to imagine fearful things. The hall door closed upon Mrs. D'Arcy, Mr. Donovan, and Nancy, and his eye reverted, however, to the mysterious carriage. It was about two miles distant. Whose could it be? Mr. Mossop's house lay in a different direction; and no house of any consideration was situated in the barren and wild district from which it seemed to come. Did it contain his friend, Attorney Dooly, the sheriff, and the legal posse who were to give him possession of his new estate and mansion? A noise of horses upon the road which ran by the avenue gate, enabled him to dispose of the last question, when he turned his looks, and saw the two gentlemen alluded to, heading a body of men, all mounted and armed, and all just starting out of a brisk trot into a gallop. At the sight, he dropped on his knees, and lay prostrate on the grass, impulsively avoiding their notice, as if he had been a felon of whom they were in pursuit.

And now Daniel's situation was suddenly comprehended and felt by him. There galloped a band of ruffians, the lowest of the low, the cruel among the cruel, headed by a knave and hypocrite, to turn his father, his mother, and his brother, out of their old home; out of the old home before his eyes—(his glance rested on what used to be the window of his own little sleeping chamber)—there they galloped; he could see their heads rapidly and, he thought, fiercely moving on, still on, over the hedge that lined the road; there they were, racing forwards, only a few yards between them and the avenue gate; and sent by whom? guns and pistols in their hands, or hangers by their sides, for his gentle lady-mother, and for his feeble old father, and supplied by whom? His heart grew weak, in fear and horror; his frame shook, perspiration mingled with the

unheeded mist which had been gathering on his forehead ; he scraped his nails along the grass, as he crouched, and in puny, whispering, disjointed words, such as the dream-ridden try to use in their coward beseechings to be freed from an annihilating pain and terror,—“ Stop, good gentlemen,” he said,—“ stop, for the mercy of God ! stop, stop, and don’t ye kill me.”

His revenge, his wrath, his selfishness, his love for Dora, his hatred of his brother, all were in that excruciating moment forgotten, and he only feared for his friends, his nearest and dearest, and regarded himself as an unparalleled monster. His character shook off its bonds ; its latest and last bonds of sin and obstinacy, and even in its present weakness and exhaustion, was itself again. And, in some vindication of Daniel, it may be said, that he had imagined, and raved, and spoken of the scene now opening to him, but had never called it up truly before his mind, and never actually willed it. If any person, who, with all his frightful faults, likes Daniel less than we do, may think proper here to remark that the same excuse can be made for all the crimes committed by ungoverned passion, then it must be answered that Attorney Doolly, to say nothing of his clerk, had taken Daniel by surprise in hurrying events to a crisis ; that, in fact, without once giving him a hint of the circumstances or means by which his angry project was to be executed, the interested lawyer had precipitated it, in point of time, and heightened it, in point of atrocity : nay, had Daniel been allowed, or could he have allowed himself pause enough to ascertain and fix the measures within which even his revenge would have stopped short, it is certain he must have limited them to the attaining for him the power of dictating to his family—the having all, whom he believed hated and conspired against him, “ at his mercy ;” and hence his most severe reprehender will not charge him with the guilt of deliberately slipping a gang of legal ruffians upon the sacred domestic privacy of the parents he still really loved.

The childish accents in which he uttered his appeal to the sheriff’s party to stop, were unheard by them ; had they been heard, they would have been unheeded. Perhaps a moment of stupefaction succeeded ; for his next observation showed him some of the armed men entering the house, while others surrounded it. Then came screams upon his ear, wild, terrible screams, and he was again standing upright. The servant, Nancy, ran out of the open hall-door, like a mad creature, continuing one of the cries he had heard, and clapping her hands, and pointing to the house, and to a particular window of the

house, as she obviously addressed some appeal to the mounted group on the lawn. Daniel thought her hand motioned towards the window of his father's bed-room—and what did he dread then?

The dread was expressed in words which came measured from his lips, as he slowly raised his clenched hand over his head—"Eternal God above me! I have killed my father!" Freezing at one instant, burning the next, he ran down the eminence, through the stems of the trees which bounded the lawn, and then from clump to clump of younger trees, which studded it, still, strange to say, fearing observation, though his first impulse had been to appear on the scene, until at last he flung himself into the shade of a clump, within a few yards of the hall-door, unnoticed amid the general confusion. Here, panting and shaking, a choking in his throat as if it were stuffed with hard lumps, and his tongue often thrust out between his lips to relieve their parched hotness, he lay almost incapable of farther thought or feeling. "Is he dead?" was the question he had come to shriek forth amid them all; but even that had now escaped his memory.

In a short time, however, loud voices within the house aroused his attention; he could distinguish those of his brother Marks and 'Torney Dooly, in violent altercation. Then his mother spoke, in the low, shivering, heart-cutting tones of female submission under a great sorrow, mixed with the dignified self-assertion of a lady. A pause ensued; once broken by screams from Nancy of a more terrific kind than those she had before uttered, and, it seemed, suppressed by Mrs. D'Arcy's remonstrance; and presently succeeded a strange noise of stamping feet through the house; and then in Hugh D'Arcy's bed-room, a struggling and talking of many persons, and a scraping, occasionally, of something heavy along the boards. "They are dragging him out to me in his coffin!" thought Daniel. The same noises came down the stairs, and into the hall; Daniel fixed his straining eyes on the hall door. First Nancy rushed out; Marks followed, bearing his paralysed father in a chair; Mrs. D'Arcy, leaning on Mr. Donovan, who also supported his daughter Helen, trod close behind. Daniel's whole soul was now momentarily occupied in endeavouring to comprehend this unexpected vision of his father.

With the zealous and desperate exertion of his whole strength, Marks tottered under the weight of the crippled old man, and laid him down just outside the door, it would seem

from inability to proceed. As he did so, "A moment, here, good Attorney Dooly," he said.

"Only one moment, sir," pleaded Mrs. D'Arcy, "to wet his lips, and rest my son, and we shall soon be on the road with him;" and while she spoke, the miserable lady, suppressing every tear that gathered to burst forth, and compelling her fine features into the calm of a breaking heart, stepped slowly to her insensible husband, wiped the damp from his forehead with her handkerchief; stooped and kissed it, and then knelt to drop some cordial out of a phial upon his poor smiling lips.

"And when we shall be quite out of view, Attorney," she continued, "and when the new owner of the house comes to claim the key of the door you are now putting up for him so carefully, tell him, sir, that his mother knelt down in every room of his old home, and almost on the threshold, wishing and trying to curse him, but could not; but that, instead, after all he has done, they were bless—blessings that came—" Mrs. D'Arcy's endeavours were not longer able to suppress the outbreak of her heart, and she interrupted herself in agonies.

Had the case not been so, she would have otherwise experienced an interruption. At the moment, Daniel came like a wild beast from his lair straight upon Attorney Dooly, and crying "Give me *that* man!" twisted the key of the hall door out of the hand of his careful friend. "What's all this?" he continued, unlocking and throwing the door open—"who dared to do this?—and what's the matter, father, dear, with you? and, if it's so sick you are, why don't you keep to the bed?" In the course of uttering these words, he caught up by its arms the easy chair in which Hugh D'Arcy sat, and, as if he but dandled a child, ran into the house with the pious load under which his elder brother had stumbled. The astonished spectators were greatly startled, after the father and son had disappeared in the hall, to hear the old man exclaim, "Dan! is it yourself, Dan, my boy?" and still more so with Daniel's answer, preceded by a laugh; "Ah! aha, father! I've cured you, have I? but I'll cure you better; first lie down in your bed, up-stairs: come, father!"

In an incredibly short time, considering the laborious task he had to perform, Daniel came out again: "That's done," he now said, "and well done! he and I are friends, at any rate: he made me kneel down, in spite of me, and put his hand on my head, and gave me his blessing. Where's my mother? where's Madam D'Arcy? Come into your house,

mother, and look after my father ;" he took her hand. "Where's Marks ? come in you, too, Marks ;" he took his brother's hand also. "Speed down to the kitchen, to your work, Nancy, you poor fool ; and come in, Mr. Donovan and Miss Donovan ; sure, it's glad in the heart my people will be to see ye, and to make much o' ye ; stop,—I don't think Dora is here ? and stop again, what luck is driving to us, now ?"

The carriage, which Daniel had seen at a distance speeding down the rough by-road, as he stood on the eminence, to one side of the lawn, entered the avenue gate, guarded by two mounted troops, and rapidly approached the house. To the astonishment of some, and the consternation of others of the lookers on, Dinnis Haggerty, and his old friend Hicks, the bailiff, occupied seats upon its outside, the one with the driver, the other with the footman : and, at a nearer view, they appeared well bound with cords. Ere the vehicle stopped, a head was stretched out through one of the windows, and while Daniel answered one of his own last questions by exclaiming, "But here she is, by the sky and all the stars in it!" Mr. Donovan and Helen ran to embrace Dora.

"Dan, too ! Dan, too !" cried Dora, "I want him, too ! Oh, Dan, dear !" as he advanced alone, quite confounded ; "we have both been terribly imposed on ! and here are the two persons," as Jinny Haggerty was handed out of the carriage by a servant, "to tell you so ;—she," pointing to Jinny, "and he," pointing up to Dinny, "for they have both been made to satisfy me, already."

"Yes, we contrived that," said Mr. Mossop, "after arresting Master Haggerty on a charge of abduction, supported by his ancient ally there—first secured, and well terrified ; and Miss Haggerty, upon a suspicion of irregular and disorderly conduct in her mistress's house, as well as of various petty larcenies—Some one lay hands on that man!" suddenly exclaimed the speaker, pointing to Attorney Dooly, who was quietly withdrawing from the scene.

Daniel would not have asked a more agreeable commission. In an instant, he closed upon Dooly. The man turned at bay, and was drawing out a pistol. "Come !" cried Daniel, and struck him with his clenched hand to the ground ; "put cords round him, too, and plenty of them," he resumed, as some of Dolly's own party came to help him ; "for he's the maker and manager of all this, whatever it is, or however it turns out."

Mr. Dooly called upon Mr. Mossop to account for the violence offered to him.

"We must detain you as an accomplice, before the fact, in the forcible abduction of this young lady," answered the magistrate.

"Upon whose evidence?" demanded the accused.

"First, upon that of the common accomplice of Haggerty and yourself, and the common informer against both, Hicks, the discovering loyalist.—Open the carriage," continued Mr. Mossop, addressing his servant. When his orders were obeyed, he walked to its side, saying, "Here is my second witness," and assisted Mrs. Dooly to descend.

"Remember, you are not to speak," whispered Mr. Mossop, to the poor woman.

"I'll never open my lips to Micky Dooly, while the breath to speak the words is in the body o' me," she answered, steadily and determinedly; "it's all over between us sir: he took me, and called me his wife, for my money: I took him, out o' the foolish pride o' my haart, thinking to be a lady: there was never a spark o' threelikin' between us—no, not as much as would light a poor man's pipe of a could mornin'; an' we're both punished, as we deserve, an' that's the lenth-and-breadth of it; thank God, for ever, an' amin!"

"Mr. Dooly," resumed the magistrate, coming close to the attorney, "when next you depend for secrecy upon the little side-door in your office, pray do not forget that, for reasons of her own, your wife may have got a second key to it, before-hand."

Dooly remembered the noises he had heard in the office, and from the last of which, against his strong suspicion, Daniel's coming to the parlour window had diverted him. He cursed his own mistake in his soul, and his hopes were giving way; but he rallied.

"This can never be believed, Mr. Mossop: a wife giving evidence against her husband—against his life, perhaps. Besides, sir, a wife's evidence is inadmissible, under any circumstances, against her legal protector."

"I grant you that last objection," said Mossop.

"Well, and what then?" sneered the attorney.

"Nothing, sir, only that we have found out this morning, that you are not her legal husband, at all. Mrs. Judith Rafferty, for that is the good woman's true name, has never regularly conformed to the established religion; and you know that well; at all events, we can prove it. Well, sir, such being

the case, the mock ceremony between you and her is annulled by the nineteenth of George the Second, chapter the eleventh, clause the thirteenth—I like to give a man learned in the law my authority, at full length ;—annulled, sir, even though you had been married by a Protestant clergyman. But again, we can prove that Judith Rafferty, as constant to her old faith as she has been to you, master attorney, notwithstanding your arrangements before ‘the little archdeacon,’”—Dooly winced—“refused to permit a heretic minister to bless her nuptial vow, and before she would transfer her long stocking-full of old guineas into your custody, was wedded to you by a concealed priest in Dublin—although you told us it happened by the hands of a different kind of clergyman there, under special license: and so, sir, you are no more her legal husband than I am; and so, sir, over again, she is a competent witness against you for this abduction—if, indeed, we shall use her testimony, which I hope it will not be found indispensable to compel her to give.”

“Well, Mr. Mossop, we are nothing to each other, with all my heart, and thus is poor Judy disposed of, at all events, and I wish to hear no more of her.”

“Softly, attorney: if you have no right to her, you have no right to her money, and, as Judy will have to refit her shop, she may want it, herself: so, till you enable us to pay it back to her, we must needs look close after you, and request you to hear a *little* more of her.”

“She shall never touch a penny of it, unless by legal process,” answered Dooly, losing temper, “and I think I may know how to play at that game with her, or with you either.”

“Try, then, sir. Do you remember aught of a statute which says that none but Protestants shall be solicitors or attorneys?”

“I remember all of it. But you do not go upon a case of want of regular conforming on my part? It was open—in the town church.”

“As open as the day. Another question, however: what says the seventh of this reign?” Dooly started, bit his lip, and was silent.

“You forget. I’ll tell you. It says, that ‘barristers and solicitors, marrying Papists, are deemed Papists, and made liable to all penalties as such.’ And now, Mister Dooly—plain Mister Dooly—there are a few statutes more than you quoted for your young friend, before day-break this morning. And now, listen—scoundrel! According to the letter of the

law you would inflict, shall you be dealt with ! and according to it you—you, ‘deemed’ Papist, are no longer a member of the profession you have disgraced.—And no longer entitled to receive more than thirty pounds profit out of the great farm—the almost estate—you hold—nay—to receive a penny out of it—nay—to hold it, from the moment that a good Protestant can be found to inform of your ‘rate of profit’—and so, beggar—beggar, as mean and as branded as the morning you were chased by the dogs out of the house we now stand before—and which you came here to-day, to destroy—low, baffled beggar! gainsay my law if you can.—The game you challenged me to play with you is over.—Take him into the town.”

During this conversation between the magistrate and the ex-attorney, Dora, Daniel, Marks, and the two Haggertys had been discoursing aside, Mrs. Judith Rafferty being occasionally appealed to. While Dooly was taken in charge, Dora led Dan to his brother and mother, and happy was his heart as he returned their embraces.

“ But I can never forgive myself, Marks, dear,” he said.

“ I won’t let you, Dan, my boy,” replied Marks, “ until you say something for me to Helen, in return for what I said to Dora for you, when she was so vexed with you, last night.”

THE END.